

THE *Jesus Christ.*
SOULES

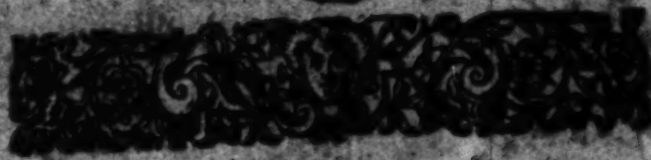
PREPARATION
FOR CHRIST.

OR,
A TREATISE
OF CONTRITION.

Wherein is discovered
How God breaks the heart
and wounds the Soule, in the con-
version of a Sinner to Himselfe.

PSAL. 51. 17.

*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: A broken and a
contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*



LONDON,

Printed for ROBERT DAVVLMAN, at the signe of
the Brazen-serpent in Pauls Churchyard.

1632.

Commons of our nation
One place the other us
from London

Anthony Hornor

His Book

London the 4 1670



Anthony Hornor

His Book

Don 1670

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THE SOVLES PREPARATION FOR CHRIST.

ACTS 2. 37.

Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said to Peter and the other Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall wee doe to bee saved?

IN this great worke of preparation for Christ, Observe two things. First, the dispensation of the worke of Grace on Gods part, he pulls a sinner from sinne to himselfe; & Secondly, the frame and temper of spirit that God workes in the hearts of those, that he doth draw: and that makes its selfe knowne in two particulars, partly

in Contrition, partly in humiliation; For our better proceeding in the prosecution of these two charge points, I shall handle them severally, and at large. And first we will list out what this Contrition and humiliation is, that we may not deceive our selves, and think we have them, when it is nothing so.

What contri-
on is.

1.

2.

3.

Psal. 74.4.

Psal. 38.2.

This Contrition (as I conceive) is nothing else, but namely when a sinner by the sight of sinne, and vilenesse of it, and the punishment due to the same, is made sensible of sinne, and is made to hate it, and hath his heart separated from the same; and the sight of sin makes it selfe knowne in three particulars: First, when the soule is sensible of sinne; Secondly, when it hath a hearty and sound sorrow for the same, and an earnest detestation of it. Thirdly, when he hath his heart separated from his corruptions. All these are not wrought, so much by any power that is in us, as by the Almighty power of God working in us; for the sinner would not see his sin, but the Lord forceth him, as the holy Prophet saith: *Thou holdest my eyes waking, I am so troubled that I cannot sleepe.* the Lord holds, and to a small sinfull wretch, so that his sinne wakes, and sleepeeth, and goeth with him, nay the soule of a poore sinner would bear backe the blow, and would not have the word to touch him, he labours to thrust off the arrows of the Almighty, which the Lord shooteth into the soule; but the Lord will not suffer him so to doe; *Thy arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore.* Psalm. 38.2. As it is

Prophe

Prophet had said, I would faine have beate backe
thine arrowes, but they sticke fast in me; and I
would have shaken off the burden, that lay upon
me, but thine hand presseth me sore, so then at
last, when the sinner sees, hee cannot shake off the
arrowes, then he is content to bee separate from
his corruptions.

This is in generall in the text, wherein you shall
plainly see these three particulars fully expressed.

First, the sight of sinne by the hearing of *Peters*
words, and it was not by the bare hearing of his
words onely, but when *Peter* came somewhat
roundly home to them, and said, This is *Christ*
Iesus whom ye have crucified, then follows the
former worke, namely, the acknowledgement of
their sinnes, and the first cause that made them see
their sinne, was a particular application of their
sinnes, hee came punctually and particularly to
them, and said, you are they that have crucified
the Lord *Christ*, this touched them and made
them see their sinnes.

Secondly, the daily and serious meditation
and apprehension of their sinnes, and of those
truths, which were delivered in the word: *hear-*
ing, that is, daily pondering and considering of
the evils, that were committed by them and
shewed to them.

Thirdly, *they were pricked*, they did not pricke
themseves, but the Lord followed that truth that
was delivered, and by his Almighty hand did
make that word prosperous to their soules, and
though

though they would not pierce themselves, yet the Lord pierced them.

The second part of it is in these words, *They were pricked in their hearts, not in their hands or eyes, but in their hearts.*

The third part is the separation from sin in these words, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* Whatsoever you would have us to do, we will do it, and whatsoever sinne is forbidden, wee are content to be rid of it; nay, nothing was too hard, or too much for them.

Give mee leave to take a doctrine by the way from the words; they when *they heard this*, who were these (*they?*) see this in the 36. verse, *them that had crucified the Lord of life.*

What will some say, is it possible that ever they should be so pierced frō their sinnes? it was said of *Judas* that betrayed Christ, *it had been good for that man that he had not bene borne.* What shall we thinke of those that murther Christ. If *Judas* was damned for betraying of Christ? then much more they for killing of him. Is it possible the Lord should doe good unto them, yes, even they came to be pricked in their hearts.

Doctrine

From these words this doctrine ariseth; It is possible for the most stubborne sinners upon earth to get a broken heart. *They that stoned the Prophets and killed them that were sent unto them, and slighted all the meanes of grace, they that refused Christ, and would not heare him; they are now brought upon their knees, and are resolved now, if any course might be taken to get Christ and* mercy.

mercy. *Tim. 1. 13.* one of their owne Prophets said, *the Cretians are alwayes lyers, evill beasts, and slow bellies:* a man would thinke it a vaine thing to meddle with them, they are such desperate wretches, but the text saith, *Reprove them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith,* so that a Cretian which is a filthy beast, by a sound reproofe, may come to bee a glorious Saint: and whereas the Jewes had loaden the Lord with their sinnes, therefore it was just with God to ease himselfe of his burden, and so send them and their sinnes downe to hell together. Thus a man would thinke, but the Lord did not so, as we may see in *Esay,* *I am he, that blotte out all thy transgressions, for my owne name sake, I will remember your sinnes no more,* and as the *Apostle* saith, the Gentiles were full of all unrighteousnesse, worse then they almost could be for all kind of degrees of sinne, and yet many of them became full of all holinesse; *Such were some of you* (saith the *Apostle*) and in another place we may see that a *Scarlet* sinner may become a Saint in nature; we know this scarlet is such a deepe die, that all the art under heaven cannot alter it: Yet the Lord can make of a *Scarlet* sinner, a milke white Saint. I doe not say it will ever be, and it doth alwaies come to passe, but it is possible.

The reason is taken from the Lords Almighty goodnesse and power, the Lord is able to supply all wants, and amend that which is amisse, may, he is able to do more then that thou standest in need of. When the Lord made heaven & earth

Esay 43. 23. 25.

Rom. 19. 29.

Esay 7. 18.

Reason.

The Soules preparation

Plalm 103. 3.

he did not spend all his strength, that he was able to help no more. No, no, he is All-sufficient still, he is not onely able to continue that good, which the creature hath, but to make a glorious supply of whatsoever is wanting, as *David* saith, *He pardoneth all thy iniquities, and forgiveth all thy sinnes:* not some, but all, otherwise he were not All-sufficient, unlesse he had a salve for every sore, and a medicine for every malady; if our sinnes were more then God could pardon, or if our weakenesses were more able to overthrow us, then his strength to uphold us, he were not All-sufficient: Indeed there are some things which the scripture saith, God cannot doe, but it is not because of the want of power in God, but because there is a weakenesse in the creature; As God cannot deny himselfe, but the more and greater our sinnes and wickednesse are, the more will the strength and glory of his power appeare in pardoning of them, and where sinne abounds, there grace abounds much more in the pardoning of the same: Christ is All-sufficient in power to procure mercy for all thy sinnes, and the Spirit is all-sufficiently able to apply the satisfaction of Christ to thy soule; and therefore be thy condition never so fearefull, (the sinne against the holy Ghost onely excepted) there is power and mercy in the Lord to pardon thee, and it is possible for thee to finde mercy.

Use.

The first use is for reproofe, and it checks the desperate discouragement that harbours in the hearts of many pious sinners, that if they had no

no power in themselves, no succour in the meane;
 they doe question in this case, and presently
 conclude impossibilitie to receive mercy, and
 they thinke there is no hope of pardon, as here-
 tofore they have had no care in sinning, because
 they cannot see how it may be, they suppose it
 cannot be: This bringeth a great indignity to the
 Lord Jesus Christ, and a great discouragement
 to themselves: why? the Lord hath hardnesse, and
 difficulties at command. When the siege about
 Jerusalem was marvellous sore, and every man
 did despaire of any comfort or succour, the Prophet
 said, *before to morrow this time shall a measure of
 fine flower be sold for a shekle*, and then a Lord on
 whose hand the King leaned, said, If the Lord
 should make windowes in heaven, how can this
 thing be? and the Prophet said unto him, *thou shalt
 see it, but not eat of it*, so it is with many that begge
 often, and the Lord answereth not, so that the
 soule is marvellously starved, and the flood of in-
 iquitie comes in amaine upon the soule, and all
 his sinnes come to his view, and the heart be-
 ginneth to reason in this manner, If the depths of
 Gods mercies should be opened, can all these sins
 be pardoned? and can this damned soule of mine
 be saved? Surely this cannot be. It is just with
 God wee should seeke mercy, given to others as
 bad as wee, and yet wee not taste of it, because
 wee distrust the Lord. Cains sin was so much the
 greater, because hee said it could not be forgiven:
 so it is a horrible sinne to say, the Lord is not so
 mercifull, as the Devill is malicious, and thus the

1 King 22.

world, and a sinfull heart, should not be able to daune me then God is to be feared; if this were so, God were no God, and Christ no redeemer, and the Spirit no comforter; this line is the sin, our selves, and the devill above God & the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh therefore check all those discouragements of soule which too much prevaile with us.

Use 2.

Secondly, it is a ground of great encouragement to provoke the hearts of all wicked men under heaven, to looke out of that condition wherein they are, for some mercy; because the most wicked of the world may be wrought upon, and the most prophane heart may be pierced; Who therefore would not have his heart quickned up, to seeke out for recovery from that estate wherein he is. All you poore creatures, if there be any here present, as I doubt not but there are, Oh you poore and ungodly sinfull creatures, my soule pitties you, you that have had your hands imbrued in the blood of Christ, and whose finnes are written with a pen of Ison, and are seene in every corner of the street, you that are thus in the gall of bitterness, and yet in the kingdom of darkness, though your case for the present be very desperate, yet here is a little twigge in the midst of the maine sea, whereupon you may lay hold. And this may make you looke up, the Lord may shew mercy unto you, as proud, as stubborn, and rebellious as you, have had mercy, if you have the hearts of men looke for mercy, though your estate be full of fall for the present,

yet

yet it may be good: God hath not set the seals of
condemnation upon your finnes; he hath not yet
sent you to hell. Consider this whatsoever thou
art, thou yet livest upon the earth, and enjoyest
the meanes, and it is possible yet to have all thy
finnes pardoned; oh say about thee, goe home, &
say, Good Lord, were they pierced in their hearts
that pierced the Lord Iesus; and were their
soules wounded? In conclusion then, why may
not my prophane sinfull heart be humbled and
pierced? It may be so, if the Lord say, *Amen*; it
will be thus, that disease is not past remedy that
hath beene cured in others, therefore let this lay
thy heart, as bad as thou have been humbled and
brought home, and therefore why not thou?

But the soule will say, Can all these abomina-
tions be removed? and is it possible all these re-
bellions of my heart should be pardoned, and all
this loosenes and security should be cast behind
the backe of the Lord? I say it cannot be.

It is possible: onely labour thou that it may be,
and that thou maist not be puffed up with pre-
sumption; consider these three Cautions in thy
seeking.

The first caution is: First, consider in thy see-
king, a little mercy will not serve the turne; thou
that hast been an old weather-beaten sinner, and
hast wallowed in thy filthinesse, when thou goest
to God for grace, consider it is not a little grace,
or a small worke, that will doe the deed; it is not
a few spoonfulls or buckets full, that will cleanse
a foule skinne; so if thou hast had a filthy, pro-
phane

3 Cautions.

1

phan heart, which hath been a through-fare to all wickednesse, and thou hast thus given thy selfe liberty thereunto, and hast continued therein; there must be a well of mercy to purge such a miserable wretch as thou art.

Psal. 51.

When *David* had committed those two sins of adultery & murder, & had continued in them long, he was forced to beg for much mercy; and to say, *purge me, wash me, cleanse me.* O Lord these stains are marvelous deepe, therefore purge me with hisope; nay he had never done with it, because his sinnes were more then ordinary; So, it will cost a great deale of worke before a loose prophane drunkard can be made cleane.

Secondly, thou must expect it with much difficulty and hardnesse in thy selfe, thou that hast beene rivetted in thy base lusts and corruptions, the Lord will make all cracke before thou shalt finde mercy; thou that hast out-braved heaven with thy prophanesse, the Lord will make thee a mitrour of humiliation, as heretofore thou hast beene a spectacle of filthinesse. A man that hath had a bone long out of joynt, & it is now festred, it will make him cry many an *oh*, before it be brought into his right place againe; So it is with a man whose heart is full of filthines, it will cost him much paines and difficulty and heart-smart, before the Lord will bring the soule to a right set againe. *Manasses* humbled himselfe mightily before the Lord, because he had bin a mighty proud rebellious man, the Lord made his humiliation as miraculous as his sinnes had beene, and

and so *David* when he had given his sinnes ease in bedding with them, the Lord brake all his bones and did awaken him with a witnesse.

Lastly, you must resolve to bestow the utmost of your endeavour to get this mercy at the hands of the Lord: It is not a dipping of a foule cloth in water will cleanse it, but it must be soaked and rinsed in it: so you must not thinke to have the foule staines of sinne washed away with a few teares; No, no, you must rub your hearts over & over, and awake your consciences againe and againe; it is not a little examination, nor a little sorrow will serve the turne; the Lord will pull downe those proud hearts of yours, and (it may be,) let you goe a begging for mercy all your dayes, and well you may have it at your last gasp when all is done.

The maine point in hand is this, It is for the first part of contrition for the sight of sinne; This *hearing* is not barely the sound of a mans words, but the sense and meaning of the words, by which the mind is inlightned, and he begins seriously to ponder the nature of his sinnes, that were so layed open unto him: thus *hearing* they came to be *pierced*.

The first doctrine is this, there must be a true sight of sinne before the soule can be broken; for the text saith, They did first *heare* and then apprehend the evill that was done by them; & thus they were brought to a saving remorse for their sinnes: *Ezek: 36.31.* the text saith, *Then shall you remember your owne evill waies & your doings, that were*

Doctrins.

Ezek: 36.31.

Then shall you remember your owne evill waies & your doings, that were

Jerem. 31. 34.

Job. 36. 9.

Jerem. 8. 6. 8.

What the true
sight of sin is.

were not good, and shall loath your selves for your a-
bominations. First, they shall remeber their works,
and then loath themselves; it is the course that
Ephraim takes in Jeremias, After that I was in-
firmed, I swore upon my thigh; and after I was tur-
ned, I repented; I was ashamed and confounded, because
I did beare the reproach of my youth. And it is Gods
course which he takes with his, as in Job. When
the Lord had once given his people into a fetters, he
shewed them their wickednesse, and makes their eares
open to discipline. And in another place the Pro-
phet shewed the ground & reason why the peo-
ple repented not, they understood not the ground
and reason of their sinne, For he man saith, What
have I done? As a horse rusheth into the battaile
and seareth nothing, so a wicked man continues
in a sinfull course, never considering what he hath
done, the drunkard doth not say, How have I a-
bused Gods creatures? and the despiser of Gods
ordinances doth not say, How have I rejected
the Lord Jesus Christ? And therefore no won-
der though he be not affected with that he doth.
Now for the better clearing of this doctrine, I
will handle these three things: First, I will shew
what this true sight of sinne is: Secondly, I will
shew the reason why there must be a true sight of
sinne, before the soule can be broken for it:
thirdly, I will make use of the point.

First, it is not every sight of sinne will serve
the turne, nor every apprehension of a mans vili-
nesse, but it must have these two properties in it,
First, he must see sinne clearly; Secondly, con-
victingly.

victingly. First, he that will see sinne clearly, must see it truly and fully, & be able to fadome the compasse of his corruptions and to dive into the depth of the wretchednesse of his vile heart, otherwise it will befall a mans sinne as it doth the wound of a mans body, when a man looks into the wound overly, and doth not search it to the bottome, it begins to fester and rancle, and so in the end he is flaine by it; so it is with most sinners, we carry all away with this, We are sinners, and such ordinary confessions; but we never see the depth of the wound of sinne, and so are flaine by our sinnes: it is not a generall, slight, & confused sight of sinne that will serve the turne: it is not enough to say, It is my infirmity, and I cannot amend it: and we are all sinners, and so forth. No, this is the ground why we mistake our evils, and reforme not our waies; because we have a slight and an overly sight of sinne: a man must prove his wayes as the goldsmith doth his gold in the fire, a man must search narrowly, and have much light to see what the vilenesse of his owne heart is, and to see what his sinnes are, that doe procure the wrath of God against him, as the prophet David saith: *I considered my waies, and turned my feet into a thy testimonies*: the phrase in the originall is thus much; *I turned my sinnes upside downe*; he looked all over his waies. And as Zachary saith: *When the people shall looke unto him whom they have pierced, and consider the nature of their finnes, then shall they mourne*. Note, that this clear sight of sin may appeare in two particulars.

The property of it.

Psal. 51. 36.
opened.

Zach. 11. 10.

First,

The Soules preparation

First, a man must see his sinne nakedly in its owne proper colours, we must not looke upon sinne through many mediums, through profits, pleasures, and the contentments of this world; for so we mistake sinne: but the soule of a true Christian that would see sinne clearly, he must strip it cleane of all content and quiet that ever the heart hath received from any corruption, and the heart must looke upon sinne in the danger of it; as the adulterer must not looke upon sinne in regard of the sweetnes of it, nor the drūkard upon his sinne in regard of the contentment that comes thereby, nor the covetous man in regard of the profit that comes by his sinne; you that are such, the time will come when you must die, and then consider what good these sinfull courses will doe you, how will you judge of sinne then, when it shall leave a blot upon thy soule, and a guilt upon thy conscience, what wilt thou then thinke of it? we must deale with sinne as with a serpent, we must not play with a serpent as children doe, because it hath a fine speckled skinne, but fly from it, because of the sting: so must we deale with sinne: a prophane gallant will prophane the Sabbaths, because otherwise he should be counted a puritane; Looke not at the speckled skin of sinne, but how thou canst answere for thy sinne before God, especially seeing the Lord saith, *I will not hold that man guiltles that blasphemes my name*, of what place or condition so ever he be: Looke now on the nature of thy sinnes nakedly.

Secondly,

Secondly, we must looke on the nature of sin in the venome of it, the deadly hurtfull nature that it hath for plagues and miseries it doth procure to our soules; and that you may doe partly if you compare it with other things, and partly if you looke at it in regard of your selves; First, compare sinne with those things that are most fearefull and horrible; As suppose any soule here present were to behold the damned in hell, and if the Lord should give thee a little peepe hole into hell, that thou didst see the horror of those damned soules, and thy heart begins to shake in the consideration thereof; then propound this to thy owne heart, what paines the damned in hell doe indure for sinne, and thy heart will shake and quake at it, the least sinne that ever thou didst commit, though thou makest a light matter of it, is a greater evill then the paines of the damned in hell setting aside their sinne, all the torments in hell are not so great an evill, as the least sinne is: men begin to shrink at this, & loath to go downe to hell, and to be in endlesse torments.

Now I will make it good by three reasons that sinne is a greater evill then those torments and plagues which the damned in hell do indure.

The first reason is this, That which deprives a man of the greatest good must needs be the greatest evill, nature saies so much, that which deprives a man of all that comfort and happinesse wherein the soule finds most content, that must needs be the greatest euill of all, but sinne onely deprives a man of the greatest good: for the good of

What a horrible thing sinne is.

I.
Reason.

of the soule is, to have an heart united unto God and to have fellowship with him, to have him & salvation through him, to be one with the Lord: this is the chiefest good of the soule: All things here below are made for the good of the body, and the body is made for the good of the soule, and the soule is made for God; and these things here below are only so farre good to us, as they are meanes to make us enjoy a nearer communion with God; and contrarily, riches, and honours, and profits, and pleasures, are as so many curses to us, if by them our hearts be withdrawne from God: The reason why God is estranged from us, it is not because we are poore, or pursued, or imprisoned, or the like; but it is sin that breakes the union betweene God and us, as the prophet *Esay* saith, *Your sinnes have separated betweene you and your God*: Now that which separates from God which is the chiefest good, it is our sinnes; it is not punishment, that takes away the mercy of God from us; but a proud rebellious heart, and the contempt of Gods ordinances; Therefore sinne is farre worse then all the plagues that the damned doe or can suffer.

Esay 59.2.

Reason 2.

Secondly, because there is nothing so contrary and opposite against the Lord as sinne & corruption, and this is the reason why God is the inflicter of all the punishments of the damned in hell: it is through the Iustice of God that they are damned, because God is of such a pure nature that sinne cannot be in him, nor practised by him.

Reason 3.

Thirdly, because it is sinne that doth procure all

all plagues and punishments to the damned, and therefore being the cause why they suffer, it must needs be greater then all punishments: for all punishments are made miserable by reason of sin, therefore sinne is a greater evill then all the misery of the damned. If a man were in prison and had the peace of a good Conscience, his prison would be a pallace unto him, and though a man were in shame and disgrace, and yet have the favour of God, there were no misery in him, so it is with sinne; if no man suffer but for sinne, then sin is a greater evill then all other punishments, as being the fountaine from whence they flow.

Now let us looke upon sinne through these things, and when our corrupt heart provokes us, and the world allure us, & the devill tempts us to take any contentment in a sinfull way, suppose we saw hell fire burning before us, and the pit of hell gaping to swallow us, and sinne enticing of us, and let us say thus to our soules, It is better for a man to be cast into the torments of hell amongst the damned, then to be overcome with any sin, and so to rebell against the Lord. Now therefore if those plagues and punishments make the soule shake in the consideration of them; Oh then blesse thy selfe so much the more from sinne which is the cause all plagues whatsoever. Were a man in hell and wanted his sinnes, the Lord would love him in hell, and deliver him from all those plagues: But if any man were free from all punishments, and in honour, and wealth, if he were a sinfull and wretched creature, the Lord

would hate him in the height of all his prosperitie, and throw him downe to hell for ever.

Secondly, we must see sinne simply as it is in it selfe, in regard of the proper worke of it; it is nothing else but a profest opposing of God himselfe; a sinfull creature joynes side with the devill and the world, and comes in battaile array against the Lord, and flies in the face of the God of hosts; they are called *haters of God*, Psam. 83. That is when they see grace in another man, in such a man, and in such a woman, and hate them for it; little doe they thinke that they hate the God of heaven and his holy nature; and if it were possible, they would have no God in heaven, to take notice of their sins, & call the to account for them, as the wise man Gamaliel said to the Pharisees and elders, *refraine yourselves from these men, and let them alone, for if this Counsell or worke be of men, it will come to nothing, but if it be of God, you cannot destroy it, lest you be found fighters against God; you make nothing of opposing the Gospell, and preaching thereof, I tell you that there is never a creature that lives in any such sinfull course, but he is a fighter against God; and he resists the Lord as really as one man doth another, And as Stephen saith, You stifnecked and untircumcised in hearts, you have resisted against the holy Ghost: You must not thinke that you resist men onely, no (poore creatures) you resist the Spirit, and so aime at the Almighty in opposing of the meanes of grace; What a fearefull condition is this, I pray you in cold blood consider this, and*

say

say thus, Good Lord! What a sinfull wretch am I? that a poore damned wretch of the earth should stand in defiance against the God of hosts, and that I should submit my selfe to the devill, and oppose the *Lord of hostes*.

And as you resist the Lord, so you doe also passe the sentence of condemnation upon your selves, and seale up that doome which one day shall be executed upon the wicked in hell at that great day of accompt; that looke what God shall do the, the same thou dost now by sinning; this is the doome, or (as I may say) the necke verse of the wicked and the last blow; as now thou dost depart from God by sinning, so then thou shalt depart frō God forever. A wicked man forsakes God, and pluckes his heart from under the wisdom of God that should inform him in the way of life; and the soule saith, God shall not blesse me, God shall not be God unto me; but I will live as I list, and I will run downe post hast to hell, and when our hearts beginne to rise against God and his ordinances, and your soules beginne to goe against the Lord, I tell you what I would thinke with my selfe; suppose I heard the voice of the *Archangell* crying; *Arise ye dead and come to Iudgement*; and the last trumpet sounding, and the Lord Jesus comming in the heavens with his glorious Angells and did see the *Genes* standing on the left hand, and the *Saints* on the right hand, and with that I did heare the terrible sound, *Depart ye cursed*: would you be content to heare that sentence passe against your soules? Oh what

The Soules preparation

lamentation and woe your poore soules would make in those dayes; and therefore consider it well, and say that I doe that in sinning which the Lord will doe in the day of Judgement; shall I depart from the Lord and withdraw my selfe from mercy, and say Christ shall not rule over me and save me? shall I doe that against my selfe which the Lord shall doe in that day? God forbid. There are two things hardly knowne; what God is, and what our finnes are, or else we hardly apply the knowledge of them to our selves.

Object.

Answ.

Why men see
not the vilenes
of sinne.

1.

But some will object and say, if sinne be so vile in it selfe, then why doe not men see it? To this I answer, the reason why men see not their finnes, though it be so vile, it is mainly upon these two grounds.

First, because we judge not of sinne according to the word and verdict of it, but either in regard of the profit that is therein, or the pleasure that we expect there from. The Usurer looks on his profit, that comes by sinne, and the adulterer his pleasure, and *Judas* saw the money, but he did not see the malice of his owne heart, nor the want of love to his Master, and this made him take up that course which he did, but when he threw away his thirtie pence, the Lord made him see the vilenesse of his sinne, it came cleerly to his light, and therefore he cryed out: *I have sinned in betraying innocent blood.* As bribes blind the eyes of the wife and pervert judgment, so sin bribes the eyes of the soule, and therefore the Tradefman seeth much profit come by cozening & false measures,

and

and so gives way to himselfe therein, but he sees not the sin; so the oppressor seeth the mortgages, & pawnes that come in, but he cannot see his sin, till he be laid on his death bed, and then the Lord sheweth him all the wrong that he hath done.

Secondly, another reason why we see not the vilenesse of sinne, is, because we judge the nature of sinne according to Gods patience towards us, as thus, a man commits a sin & is not plagued for it, and therefore he thinkes God will not execute judgements upon him at all, *all things continue a like*, (saith the wicked man) as if he had said, you talke of the wrath of God that shall be revealed frō heaven against all ungodlines, & where is the promise of his coming? doe you not see that such a man is an oppressor, & a prophane person yet growes rich and thrives in the world, and because God spares a wicked man still for the present, therefore he thinkes all are but words, he shall be free from the punishment to come (as the Prophet saith in the name of the Lord) *These things hast thou done and I kept silence, when thou wast upon thy Ale-bench, and there thou didst speake against holinesse and purity, and because I did heare yet, and say nothing, therefore thou speakest wickedly that I was even such a one as thy selfe*. The wicked man takes Gods patience to be a kinde of allowance to him in his sinne, (as the wise man saith) *because sentence against an evill worke is not speedily executed, therefore the hearts of the finnes of men are wholly set in them to do mischief*, & as the Prophet saith, they call the proud happy,

2

Psalm. 50. 2.

Eccles. 3. 11.

Mat. 23. 47.

happy, ye that worke wickednesse are set to doe evil,
 & they that tempt God are delivered. As who should
 say, you say that the wrath of God is incensed
 against swearers, and drunkards, and the like, but
 we see them prosper, and because they doe prof-
 per thus, their hearts are set to worke wickednes,
 but howsoever, it is true the Lord doth sometime
 beare with wicked men; the longer God staies,
 the greater account they shall make, and the hea-
 vier judgements they shall receive from God;

Job. 14. 17.

See what Job saith, *thou sealest up my transgressions
 in a bagge, and thou sewest up mine iniquities*; Wic-
 ked men doe treasure up vengeance against the
 day of the Lord, the profane person treasures up
 wrath, and in the eighteenth verse he saith: The
 mountaines falling come to nothing: as if he had
 said, good Lord, who can beare all those finnes,
 that I have committed? Are they all sealed up,
 and shall all the judgements due unto them fall
 upon me heavier then the mountaines? Good
 Lord, what rock or mountaine can beare the
 weight of my finnes thus sealed up & seled, and
 laid close to my heart. And so God seales up
 an hundred thousand oathes in one bagge, and an
 ocean of pride and mischiefs done to Gods peo-
 ple and Church are barrelled up, in another, and
 the Lord shall one day lay all these upon thy
 necke, Who is able to beare all these finnes?

Now it fallies out with a finner as it is with a
 benighted debtor, one man throwes him into
 prison, and when he is there, every one comes
 against him, and so he shall never come out, but

die

die and rotte in the prison, so though the Lord will not execute judgement on thee speedily, yet in the end the Lord will be paid for all thy sins, and when thou art in hell, then mercy, and justice, and patience will cry all to heaven for justice and vengeance; then happily a drunkard is cast into prison for his drunkenness, and for his blasphemy, and then all his filthiness comes in as so many bills of indictment against him: Oh therefore labour to see sinne alive: we play with sinne as if it were dead: when children see the picture of a dead lyon upon a wall, they labour to pull him in pieces, but if there were a live lyon in the place, it would make the strongest to runne. So thou paintest thy sinne, and sayest it is thy infirmity, & God forgive your swearing, & the like, and thus you dally with your sinnes: but brethren, labour to see sinne alive, and to see sinne roaring upon you, see the pawe of sinne and the condemnation that shall be throwne upon the soule by it, and this will awake the soule in the apprehension of it.

Secondly, we must see sinne convictingly, that it may be so to us as it is in it selfe; that looke what sinne is in it selfe, we may so conceive of it in our soules being guilty of it, and this discovers it selfe in these two particulars.

First, when we have a particular apprehension in our owne person, that looke what we confesse to be in sinne in generall, we confesse the same in our owne soules, and that our sinnes are as bad as the sinnes of any: this is the cursed distemper of

How to see our
sinnes convic-
tingly.

Pro. 3. 19.

our hearts, howsoever we hold it to be truth in generall, yet when we come to our owne finnes, the case is altered; and we never come to the right seeing of them as they concerne our owne particular. As the adulterer can easily confesse the danger and filthynesse of that sinne in others, but he thinkes not his sinne to be so vile; as the VVise man saith, *He that enters into the house of an harlot, doth he ever returne againe, doth he ever take hold of the path of life?* The Lord is pleased to set such a heavy stamp on this sinfull distemperature. These are truths, and a man in his cold blood will easily confesse it in the generall; that he *never returns againe*. Take the words as they are in the letter of them, and howsoever they have some other interpretations, yet in the letter it is thus read, *he is ever hardly recovered*. Howsoever it may be, yet with much difficulty. *David* had let his soule loose in that, & he did hardly recover himselfe againe, scarce one of a thousand yet ever tooke hold of the way of life. And the drunkard will confesse the danger of his sinne in generall, when he sees his drunken mates lie grovelling in the dust, he will be ashamed of it, and say, Now no adulterer or drunkard shall ever come into the kingdome of heaven; but here is the wound of it, when he comes to his owne particular drunkenesse and uncleannesse, that he must looke into them, then the sight of a mans knowledge hath not so much power as to judge himselfe rightly, or to make a particular application to himselfe; but he thinkes his adultery and drunkenesse

kennesse is not like to another mans, or else his knowledge is but weake, or else he seeth as a man in the rwylyght, when the sun is downe and the heavens begin to withdraw their light, though a man can see to read abroad, yet he cannot see to read in the house, or in the chamber; So it is with a weake knowledge and with a feeble understanding in a wicked man, he is notable to see the vile nature of sinne in himselfe, when he comes to read his owne closet sinnes, and his bosome abominations, then he hath not so much light as to perceive them so fully in himself as he thought to doe, therefore the rule is this, Arrest thy soule in a speciall maner of those sinnes whereof thou standest guilty; that phrase in *Iob* is to good purpose, *thou lookest narrowly to my pathes thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet*, so God followed *Iob* to the hard heeles, and did narrowly observe his waies; so deale thou with thy owne soule, and set a print upon the heele of thy heart, arrest thy heart in particular for thy sins, and I would have you perceive your owne particular sinnes and follow them to your hearts, and make huy and cry after your sinnes, and dragge your hearts before the Lord, and say, Is murder, pride, drunkenness, and uncleanness, such horrible sinnes, and doth God thus fearefully plague them? Lord, it was my heart that was proud and vaine, it was my tongue that did speake filthily & blasphemously, my hand hath wrought wickednesse, my eye was wanton, and my heart was uncleane and filthy, Lord here they are, it is my affections that are disorderly,

Iob. 13. 27.

disorderly, and it is I that doe delight too much in the world; Thus bring thy heart before the Lord; you shall observe the same in *David*, so long as *Nathan* spake of sinne in generall, he conceived of it truly, and confessed the vilenes of it, and the heart of this good King did rage against the man, saying, It is the *Sonne of death*: but as soone as the prophet had said, *Thou art the man*, though he never saw his sinne kindly before, yet now his heart yeelded, and he began to see himselfe and his sinne in the naturall colours of it. So the Apostle *Iohn* saith; *He that hateth his brother is a man-slayer, and you know no man-slayer hath eternall life abiding in him.*

Then play thou the part of *Nathan*, and say; *I am the man*, it is this wretched heart of mine that hath hated the Saints of God, and therefore if I be a murderer, will not my sinne keepe me from the kingdome of heaven as well as another mans? Yes that it will, if pride and stubbornnes be such vile sins in others, then they are so in me, and as there must be a fight of our personall particular sinnes; so,

Secondly, the soule must be set downe with the audience of truth, and the conscience of a sinner should be so convicted as to yeeld and give way to that which is knowne, as not seeking any shift or way to oppose that truth which is revealed, his particular apprehension of sin is like the indictment of a sinner before God, and his conviction is that which brings the soule to such a passe, that the heart will not, nay it dares

not, nay (which is more) it cannot escape from the truth revealed: As when a man is only arested and no more, he may escape, therefore it is not enough particularly to arest the soule, and bring it under command that it cannot shift from the truth revealed: When the Lord comes to make rackes in the hearts of such as he meanes to doe good unto, the text saith, he will *reprove the world of sinne*, that is, he will *convince* the world of *wickednesse*, he will set the soule in such a stand, that it shall have nothing to say for it selfe, he cannot shift it off; for there is in every mans heart naturally such corrupt carnall pleading, that it labors to defeat, and put by the worke of the word, that it may not come home to the heart. As a man in battraile array labours to put by the blow that it may not hit his body, so it is with a corrupt heart when the word comes home to the soule; as it doth sometimes into the heart of a drunkard, or an adulterer, or a murtherer, and the word of God seemes to stabbe the heart, they put by the word of God by carnall shifts, and so breake the power of it that it cannot have its full blow upon the soule, and so the word takes no place to any purpose in them.

Now the kind of knowledge takes away all shifts, and the soule hath nothing to say for it selfe, and pluckes away all defence, that the edge of the word cannot be blunted, but that it will fall flat on the heart; this is that I would put to your consideration punctually; When there is that wisdom and knowledge revealed to the soule

soule so powerfully, that it prevails with the heart, and it gives way thereto, so that all the replies and pleas of the soule be taken away, and the soule falls under the stroke of the word, not quarrelling, but yeelding it selfe, that the word may worke upon it, and withall there is a restless amasement put into the heart of the creature, and a kind of dazeling the eye, so that the soule is not content now before it see the worst of his sinne that is revealed, and then it lies under the power of that truth which is made knowne, these two make it plaine; The minister saith, God hates such and such a sinner, and the Lord hates me too, saith the soule, for I am guilty of that sin. Many times when a sinner comes into the congregation, and attends unto the ordinary meanes of salvation, if now the Lord be pleased to work mightily, at last the mind is enlightned, and the Minister meets with his corruptions, as though he were in his bosome, and he answereth all his cavills, and takes away all his objections; With that the soule begins to be amazed to thinke that God should meet with him in this manner, and saith, If this be so, as it is for ought I know, and if all be true that the Minister saith, then the Lord be mercifull unto my soule, I am the most miserable sinner that ever was borne.

Give me leave to open a passage or two this way; Suppose there be an ignorant creature, that knoweth nothing, and he thinks God will pardon him because he is so, &c he need not consider of this or that which the minister calls upon him

for :

for I see what God saith to such, in *Esey. 44.* *It is a people of no understanding; therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour.* You thinke to carry all away with ignorance; but the God of heaven will shew you no pittie; and he that made you will not save you; When a poore soule begins to consider of this, he that made us, wil save us, Will he not? no, he will not; Not one of you, nor your wife, nor children, nor thy servant; this drives the soule into amazement, when the Lord works this truth in him, and he frequents the ordinances more diligently, and saies, if it be so, my case is fearefull; In conclusion he finds every minister saith so, and all writings confirme it, and he seeth it is so indeed; and it is the will and way of God: Then the soule is cast, and saith, I see this is just my estate and condition & therefore woe to me that ever I was borne. This is right conviction, and though his camall neighbours come to him, and beginne to cheere him up, and say, The Lord is more merciful then men are, ministers must say something, &c. If the heart be truly convicted, it returnes this answer, and saith, I have thought as you doe, but now I see there is no such matter, these are but figtree-leaves, and will not cover my nakednesse; It is true, Christ came to save sinners, and he came to humble sinners too; he came to bind up the heart; and he came to break the heart too. This is a great part of the spirit of bondage spoken of *Row. 8. 15.* *We have not received the spirit of bondage to feare againe.* When God

Esey 47. 11.

Row. 8. 15.

Iob. 7. 10.

God hath revealed a mans bondage to him: So that sees he him selfe bound hand & foot, for (marke it) so long as a man keepes in these carnall shifts, he is not in bondage; But when he is once in bondage and fettered; he saith, If ever any had a proud heart, I am he; If ever any were prophane, I am he; And if ever God hated such wretches, he hateth me. Now there is no escape, there is no plea at all; he will not go away & say, there is no such matter; Ministers many say what they will. No, no, the soule that is truly convicted of sinne yeelds it selfe; and saith I have sinned; *Oh what shall I doe unto thee thou preserver of men? saith Iob,* as if hee had said, Lord, I have no plea at all to make, nor no argument to alledge, for my selfe, I onely yeeld up the bucklers, I cannot say so bad of my selfe as I am, I have sinned Lord, *what shall I doe unto thee Oh thou preserver of men?* thus it is with a heart truly convicted and thoroughly informed of the vilenesse of sinne, he doth not withdraw him selfe and play least in sight, but he saith, this is my condition just; the Lord met with my heart this day; God resists the proud & prophane in heart, and he resists me too; I have heard much, and would not be informed, therefore it is just with God to harden my heart for ever; the Lord hath come offe with many loving perswasions to allure me, & draw me to him: If the devill had had the meanes that I have had, he would have beene moved and more bettered by thee then I have beene, and have done more then I have done; I have hated and despised all, and to this day

day I have not sicke brought upon my heart,
shall not Christ rule over me, and yet save me?
No it cannot be, except I can bring my neck
under the yoke of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is not
possible I should be saved by him, I excuse not
my selfe Lord, nay, I confesse I know more then
all the men in the world can speake by me, and
I yeed to all this and more, what shall I say, I
have sinned: O thou preserver of men, lo thou

The reason why, and how it comes to passe,
that God deales thus with poore sinners, is taken
from the office which the Lord hath placed be-
tween the heart & the man, the ground lies thus.

There are two things in the soule, First, you
conceive and understand a thing, Secondly, you
will, and choose it.

The first is the intellect of the heart, so that no-
thing can affect the heart, but so farre as reason
conceiveth it, and ushers it home to the soule,
thereupon the heart, as the King hath his Coun-
cellors which call all matters before them, and
consult about businesse, & then they bring them
before the King, to have a small sentence from
him, to know what he will have and what he will
not have. So the understanding is like the Coun-
sellors, and the will is the Queene, the under-
standing saith, this or that is good, then the will
saith, let me have it, the understanding saith, these
and these duties are required, and the will im-
brace them, the understanding conceives what
sinne is, and the will saith, these and these evils
have I done, and they will cost me my life if I
repent

Reason.

Why God con-
vinceth men
of their finnes.

I.

71.5.122

The Soules preparation

repent not. As it was with *Job*, when his *Oxen* and *Asses* were taken, it never troubled him, because he never knew it, but when he heard of it by the messengers, he said, *Woe is me, for I have sinned.*

There must be a messenger before he can be grieved for the evil. So it is with the soule of a finfull creature, the *Devill* hath made a prey and a spoile of him, thou comest into the world in *Adam*, wise, holy, and gracious, but he hath made thee unholy and ignorant, and thou considerest not this till God by his Ministers opens thy eyes, and makes thee see plainly, that the Image of *sinne* and *Satan* is upon thee, and that God is now become thy enemy, and that now thou goest on in the way to destruction, and art become the heire apparent of hell. And when these evil tydings come to the understanding, that leaves them upon the heart and will of a man, and so lets it worke effectually upon it as God doth blesse the same, as *Paul* saith, *I know that through ignorance they did it, if they had knowne the Lord of life they would never have crucified him.*

This is the cause why we commit sin, because we see it not, and therefore we sorrow not for it. As it is with some hot Clymates in the world, though there be never so much heat in the sun, yet if there bee no entrance for the heat into the house, it will not scorch nor heat any, so the understanding is like the doore or entrance into the house, and sin is of a fiery & scorching nature, if there be no passage, and if the minde know not,

and

and if the will affect not sin, it will never touch his conscience; though a man carry sin enough in his bosome to sinke his soule for ever, yet wee suffer it not to worke upon us, and wee attend not to it, because the brazen wall keepes it off: (as the proverb is) that the eye never sees, the heart never rues. Because we see not our evils, and discern not our sinnes so clearly as we should, therefore it is impossible we should be touched for them as we ought to be.

The first use is for instruction; from the former truth delivered we may learne that an ignorant heart is a naughty heart, and a miserable wretched heart, whether it be out of ignorance that cannot, or out of wilfulnesse that men will not apprehend their conditions, both are marvelous sinfull and miserable. I desire to deale plainly in this point, because I know there are many that doe flatter themselves in their conditions, and thinke all is well with them; I will say nothing of the cause, but I appeale to the hearts of all that heare me this day, & your selves shall be judges in these particulars; Imagine you did see a poore sinner come before you, and lay open his condition and bewaile it with bitternesse, saying, that for his owne part he never did find his heart touched for his sinnes, nor sorrow for his corruptions did ever enter into his soule, but he hath lived senselesse and carelesse; & for this wounding of spirit he counted it a wonder; for this humblenes of heart it was ever a riddle unto him; let any one passe sentence upon this man now

D

and

Use 1.

and tell me seriously what do you thinke of such a person: I heare (me thinkes) every man reason thus, (and every mans heart shakes at it) & saith, Good Lord, what a senselesse poore ignorant creature is this? If no humbling for sinne, no pardoning for sinne, and no share in Christ, no salvation? What, is this a good heart that is not in the way to receive any good? If a man be never broken for sinne, God will never bind him up, and if never humbled, and burthened for his sinne, God will never ease him of it.

Therefore woe to that soule that is thus miserable and accursed. I beseech you passe this sentence against your selves, Oh brethren, the hearts of men are past this brokennesse of spirit; nay, they are enemies to it, they never had their judgments cleared and convicted of their sinne, and therefore their hearts were neuer broken, and this brokennesse is so farre from their heart as it never came into the head; we thinke not of the soule nature of sinne. Dost thou thinke this to be a good heart that was never humbled & prepared for Christ? alas, it is so farre from being truly wrought upon, that it was never in any way to partake of mercy from God, therefore thy condition is marvellous miserable; thy misery is as great as thy sinne, if not greater, because when a sinfull creature is wounded and gauled for his sinne, there is some hope he may be cured and helped, but an ignorant soule is not capable of it, he is in hell and seeth it not, he is under the power of Satan and thinkes himselfe at liberty, nay for

for the present, he is incapable of any good from the meanes appointed to that end.

It is with an ignorant soule as it befell the drunkard that was asleepe on the toppes of the mast who feares no harme, because he sees it not. So it is with a sinfull heart, he is resolved to goe on still in his sinne, because he seeth not the danger; take a man that hath his heart stabbed with a stilletto and the wound is so narrow that it cannot be searched, there is no meanes to come to it; Just so it is with a blind ignorant heart, there is much meanes whereby good might be done to it, but an ignorant heart barres all out, so that nothing can doe good to the soule. All counsels, admonitions, reproofes cannot prevaile, all mercies allure not, because they find no sweetnesse in them; a Minister is as able to teach the sould whereon he sits as to doe them good. We think it is with a world of men that live in the bosome of the Church, as it is with such as have suffered shipwracke, they are cast upon the waves, and their friends are standing upon the shoare, and see them, and mourne for them, there they see one sinking, and another floating upon the waves even labouring for his life, and they sigh and mourne, but cannot helpe him; Just so it is with ignorant people that are swallowed up with the floods of iniquitie, here is one man going, and there another in the broad way to destruction, & we pittie them, and pray for them, that God would open their eyes, and give them the sight of their sinnes: but alas, they are not able to con-

ceive of any thing. We cannot come at them, & thus they sinke in their finnes.

Luke 29. 42.

Our Saviour looking over Jerusalem said, *Oh that thou hadst knowne at least in this thy day the things that belong unto thy peace, but now they are hidden from thine eyes.* As if he had said, oh now they are sinkeing, they will not be reformed nor reclaimed, now they are going the way of all flesh, and to hell roo, the way of peace is hidden from their eyes, they refuse the meanes that may doe them good; I might here condemne the Papists that say ignorance is the mother of devorion, whereas it is the breeder of all wickednesse, and the broad way to hell and everlasting destruction.

Use

The use is this, as you desire the comfort of your soules, and to be prepared for mercy and to partake of that rich grace that is in Christ, as you desire to have the rich promises of the Gospell put over to you, as ever you would have the Lord Jesus Christ a guest to your soules, you are to be entreated to give your soules no content till you have your eyes so opened to see your sins that you may be convicted of them.

Question

Answer.

Meanes how to see sinne convictingly.

Now it may be some will say, it is good that you say, but what meanes must we use to come to this sight of sinne? I answer to such poore soules, give me leave to doe three things: First I will shew some meanes how we may come to see sinne convictingly;

Secondly, I will take away all the lets that may hinder a man from it;

Thirdly

Thirdly, I will use some motives to stirre us up to use the meanes, and set upon the service, though it be somewhat harsh and redious to our Corruptions. The meanes are three.

First, we must goe to God for knowledge, the Lord knowes our hearts, therefore we must goe to him, that he would make us able to know them too; the Church of Laodicea thought none like her selfe, as it is the fashion of many in this age so to doe; and therefore the Lord said, thou *thoughtest thy selfe rich and full*, and that thou *didst want nothing*; It is an argument of a proud sinfull heart that he is alwayes wel conceited of himselfe and of his owne wit, grace, and sufficiency, but marke what the Lord saith to this Church, I counsell thee, to buy of me *eye-salve*: She thought all her compters to be good gold, & all her appearances to be good Religion, but the Lord bids her buy of him *eye-salve*; As if he had said, you see not your sinnes, and therefore goe to God, and beseech him that dwels in endles light, to let in some light into your soules.

When the poore blind man Bartimeneus late begging by the way, saying, *O thou son of David have mercy upon me*, and pressed earnestly on our Saviour, in so much that when his disciples rebuked him, he cryed so much the more; *O thou son of David have mercy on me*; and when Christ said, what wouldst thou have me to do for thee, he answered, *Lord, that I may receive my sight*. If he did so earnestly seeke for his bodily eyes, much more should we for the eyes of our soules, that we may

Mark 10. 15.

Object.

Answ.

Means 2.

Rom. 7.

Rom. 7. 7.

see our finnes; A blind mind brings a wicked heart with it, and laies a man open to all finnes; and therefore we ought to be more pinched for the want of this sight, then of our bodily eyes: and if the question be asked, what wouldst thou have *honour, riches*, or the like? Answer, O Lord the sight of my finnes; I know sin is a vile loathsome thing, O that I could see sinne convictingly and clearly.

Secondly, I labour to acquaint your selves thoroughly with God and with his law, and to see the compasse and breadth of it; the words of the commandements are few, but there are many sins forbidden in them, and many duties required; therefore labour to see thy finnes convicted, and thy many duties neglected. The Apostle Paul thought himselfe once *alive without the Law*, and who but he in the world? he was able to carry all before him; he thought his peny good silver, but when the *Law came* (saith the text) *then sinne revived*; when God had opened my eyes to see my sinne and the corruptions of my heart, then I saw my selfe a dead man, yet Paul was a Pharisee, and brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and one that did keepe the Law of God in a strict manner. Whence we learn, that a man may be an ignorant man, be his parts never so great for humane learning; and the same Apostle saith, *I had no knowlege left, except the law of God had said, thou shalt not lust*, by which it meant the tenth commandment, which forbids the secret distemper of the heart, though there is no delight and consent to it, who but

but *Raul* and yet he knew it not, and therefore no wonder though many otherwise well learned are ignorant in Gods Law, therefore looke your selves in this glasse of the word, all you that say how ever you are not able to talke so freely as others, yet you have as good a heart to God as the best, I tell you if you could but see the filthinesse of your hearts, you would be out of love with your selves forever.

An ignorant heart cannot but be a naughty heart.

Thirdly, binde your hearts to the peace and good Behaviour, and be willingly content to take every truth that is revealed, without quarrelling; and I would have a man to bind his heart, hand, and foote, that they may not dare to have any brabbling against the revealed will of God, that so what ever truth is delivered, though never so crosse and contrary to our corrupt nature, the soule may be willing to be under the blow of it, and let the strength of the word come full upon the heart. And this will make us feelingly to understand our conditions: as in *Iob*, when God had taken downe his proud heart, see how he submits himselfe, *Behold, I am vile, what shall I say? I will lay my hand upon my mouth, I have sinned, but I will go no further,* as thogh he had reasoned thus with himselfe, I have (I confesse) pleaded too much for my selfe, I have made more trust for my selfe then was needfull, I have gainesaid thy word, but now no more. Now if any man seeme to quarrell & take up arms against the truth of God, let that man

shalt thou know
that thou art
not able to
stand in the
truth of the
word

Mean. 3.

Why shouldst
thou not
be content
with the
truth of the
word

Iob. 40.3.

The Soules Rebellion

know he was never truly humbled for his sin: It is a sinfull rebellious spirit that carries it selfe thus against God & his word, the shifts whereby the soule labours to beate backe the power of the word may be reduced to these three heads;

1. Shift.

How the soule labours to beate backe the power of the word.

First, the soule hath a slight apprehension of sin, and thinketh that it is not so hainous, and so dangerous, as those hot spirited ministers beate men in hand; this is usually the common conceit of all men naturally, and even of us all, more or lesse, to make a slight account of sinne, and that for these foure respects.

Why men make slight account of sinne.

First, in respect of the commonnesse of it, because that every man is guilty of it, we slight it; what saith one; Good now, what then, are not all sinners, as well as we? though we have many saylings, yet we have many fellowes.

1.

If we were drunkards, or whoremongers, then it were somewhat. Thou sayest true indeed, thou hast many fellowes in thy finnes, and thou shalt have share with many fellowes in the punishment to come; there is room enough in hell for thee and all thy fellowes, hell hath opened her mouth wide, say the more companions thou hast had in thy finnes, the more shall be thy plagues.

Quest.

O (saith one) all the world lies in sinne, and we doe no more than the world doth.

Ans.

But if the world lies in sin, Christ never prayed for the world, and he will never save the world. What a senselesse thing is this to be such as God hates? Is this all thy pleasure that thou art a hater of God? What odds is it for a man to be a

bed

bed with a penknife or with a speare, or for a man to be murdered in the streets or in his bed: so, though thy finnes be not hydious blasphemies and the like, yet if they be perty oathes, they are enough to sinke thy soule; It is not your great swearer, but no swearer shall come into the Kingdome of heaven: the text saith not, no great liers shall enter into heaven, but no liers shall enter into heaven; What difference is there between a man that goes to hell for open rebellion, and a man that goes to hell for civill profession, and what difference is there betweene an open adulterer and a secrete adulterer?

But some will say are not all sinfull by nature, and are not some saved, and why not I as well as others?

For answer, I say, no man is saved by nature, but if any be saved, the Lord opens his eyes, and breakes his heart, and so it must be with thee too; if ever thou thinkest to receive any mercy from God.

Secondly, there is also a naturalnesse in a sinfull course, and they say, in is my nature and infirmity, and I am of a cholericke disposition, I shall sometimes sweare, when I am angry, and I cannot but be drunken sometimes, when I light into good company: What, would you have of us Saints on earth? I, either Saint or Devil, never sanctified, never saved, never purged, never glorified, as the Apostle Saint Iohn saith, He that hath his hope put on himselfe, he is perished, he strive with his whole endeavour to be pure, and

alwayes

Quest.

Ans.

Quest.

Ans.

Iohn. 3. 3.

Heb. 11. 24.

alwayes he hath a respect to all Gods comman-
demēts; And as the author to the *Hebrewes* saith,
*pursue faith and holinesse, without which no man can
be saved.*

If thou dost say, if it were an honour to pray in
my family, & if Gentlemen and Knights did it, I
would doe it. I tell thee if *holines* doth seeme to
fly away by disgrace & persecution, *tho* you must
pursue it; Nay, dost thou say it is thy nature to
sinne? Then I say the greater is thy wickednesse,
if it be thy nature so to doe. We hate not a man
because he drinkes poyson, but we hate a road
because it is of a poysonous nature, therefore rather
mourne the more for thy finnes, because it is thy
curst nature so to doe; And say, *Lord*, did only
temptations, or the world, allure me to this,
there were some hope that thou wouldest shewe
mercy upon me, but O Lord I have a curst na-
ture, and though there were no Devills, nor
world, no temptations our wardly, yet this cur-
st nature of mine would sinne against thee.

They that have received Christ, have a new
nature: and therefore if I have a carnall corrupt
nature, then my condition is most fearefull; And
say, did temptations & the world allure me, then
there were some hope of mercy, but it is my na-
ture to sinne, and therefore my estate and con-
dition is most miserable & wretched; O how
dost thou say, I am a sinner, that I have received Christ,
and yet I am a sinner, that I have received Christ,
and yet I am a sinner, that I have received Christ,

Thirdly, many say, words are but winde, and
all this winde shakes no corne, And so when we
prosse

professe men to the inward worke of the soule, not
onely to keepe men from the halter, but to tell
them, they must pull downe their proud hearts,
and be humbled for their sinnes, and the like,
then they reply, thoughts flie away suddenly, and
thoughts are free. To which I answer, these
words are such winde as will blow downe thy
soule into the bottomlesse pit of hell. It is not I
that say so, but our Saviour himselte, *By thy words
thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be
condemned*: though you make nothing of your
swearing, and idle thoughts, and revilings of
Gods people; yet the God of heaven will require
them at your hands, and you shall either receive
acquittance from Christ of them, or else venge-
ance for ever for them: *For the Lord connecth
with thousands of his Saints in flaming fire to pu-
nish not onely murderers and adulterers and the
like, but all ungodly ones*; the Lord will call thee
to an accompt for all thy abominations, nay, for
all thy speeches against the people of God, upon
thy ale bench when thou diddest tossie the too
and fro, and the Lord will set thy sinnes in order be-
fore thee; nay, he will call thee to an accompt for
them, for all thy thoughts, though they are
sudden and quickly passed over, as the Prophet
Jeremiah saith, *O Jerusalem, wash thy heart from
wickednesse, how long shall thy vaine thoughts re-
maine in thee?* Whatsoever men thinke of
thoughts, yet they are the very life and sinewes
of sinne, and they are brought forth by medita-
tion of a mans corruptions in this kinde.

Uaind wold
not staye
because

Mat. 12. 37.

Iud. 17.

Psal. 50.

Ierem. 4. 18.

The Soules preparation

How sinfull
thoughts are
produced.

30 A man may sinne more in thought then in any other kinde whatsoever; both in regard of the vilenesse of sin, and his unavoydablenesse thereof. A theefe cannot robbe all the towne; but a covetous man may wish all in the towne were hanged, that he might have their goods; and so an adulterer cannot commit sinne with every woman in the towne; but he may lust after both the godly and prophane; and he may commit adultery both with the chaste and unchaste too in his thoughts. A man may sinne infinitely in this kinde, and never have done: for no company nor place can hinder an adulterer from sinning and lusting; nor the malicious man from envying in his heart; nor the covetous man from desiring the goods of other men. Though thou dardest not cut the throat of a minister, yet thou canst malice all the ministers in the country.

4 30r Fourthly, the soule hath a strange inward resolution of cleaving to sinne, whatsoever can be said or done to the contrary. And this inward resolution of the soule hath a delight in corruptions, though he die, and be damned for the same; this plucketh the heart from the word, and layeth so many mists upon the understanding, that it cannot see the truth; when the soule hath nothing to say for it selfe, it falls to open and profest reviling of Jesus Christ, and defying of him; and hence it is, that after many good arguments the soule stands as it were at a set; and saith, I will not beleeve it, though there were five thousand Ministers to perswade me to it; and why doth

he

he so? hath he any argument to alledge? No, not a word, but he that is proud will be proud, and he that is a swearer will sweare, and will not make conscience of any thing, this comes from a proud and a sturdy heart. When *Jeremiah* would have convinced the people of their sinnes, and of the punishments threatned to them, they said, *Thou speakest falsely, there is no such matter*. So it is with many a carnall heart now a dayes; if the minister of God will not please their phantasies, then all the businesse is, they knew all this before: when as indeed they knew nothing at all. Therefore saith God, *Take heed there be not in any of you a root of bitternesse, if the soule heareth the law and blesseth himselfe in his wickednesse, and saith, I shall have peace though I walke after the imaginations of my owne heart; the Lord will not spare that man: but the ielousie of the Lord shall sweake against him;* this root of bitternesse is nothing else but sin, and a resolution to continue in it, For the Lord Jesus sake consider this, there are too many of these in the Congregation; wilt thou not beleeve Gods word, I tell thee thou deniest almost that there is a God, and thou renouncest the Lord Jesus Christ and salvation by him; thou saiest in effect, there is no God, and that there is not any meanes of grace revealed; What devilish blasphemy is this? Let me speake to the terror of all such hearts, hell never entertained any such thoughts, the devils in hel for ought I know, have not any such profest resolutions, *the devils beleeve and tremble;* the devils beleeve that the

Ier. 43. 2.

Deut. 28. 28. 29

Scriptures

The Soules preparation

Scriptures are the word of God; and they know
 there is infinite mercy in God; but they shall never
 tast of it, and they know, all the plagues threat-
 ned shall come upon them; and they shake and
 tremble at the remembrance of it. What, do the
 devills consent to the word of God, & conceive
 of it, and know that it is the truth of God and
 shall be made good upon them? Then good Lord
 of what a strange temper art thou, that wilt not
 beleeve it, & that wilt not consent that it is true?
 the devill is not worse then thou art in this case; I
 must confesse that the consideration of these pas-
 sages sometime makes the soule of a poore mini-
 ster shake within him, and were it in my power
 as it is not, the first worke that I would doe,
 should be to humble and breake the hearts of all
 such vile wretches, but all that I can or will doe,
 is this, that which the holy man *Moses* spake and
 he spake it with a marvellous caution; you that
 never came to the height of this horrible con-
 tempt, take heed that there be not any man among
 you, that saith, *It shall goe well with me wharsoever*
the minister saith. It is as much as your soules are
 worth, and to such as are guilty of this sinne I will
 give the same counsell that *Peter* gave to *Simon*
Magus, who had a base esteeme of the gift of the
Spirit, O (saith *Peter*) pray, that if it be possible, the
 thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven thee. It is a
 fearefull thing, it is a marvellous opposing of
 grace; And for you, whose eyes God hath open-
 ed, goe home & consider of the miserable estate
 of all such as lie in this sinne; goe to prayer, and
 send

Act. 8. 22.

send up requests in the behalfe of all such poore creatures; and say, Is it so Lord, that there are many such who have the name of Christians, that will not be reformed nor humbled? good Lord! that many, that have the name of Christians, will not come in; thy word will not prevaile nor take place in their hearts? Good Lord breake their hearts in pieces, breake in upon them, and let thy word overcome them in mercy and compassion, and bring them to the true knowledge of sinne here, and happinesse hereafter. And thus much of the first Cavill.

Secondly, the soule saith, I confesse I see more now then ever I conceived of before; I did not conceive that sinne was so haynous and so dangerous as it is: Now I see it is marvellous great and dangerous; yet this is my hope, that whatsoever falls, it will not light upon me; and therefore what need I care, I hope to prevent it; and then all will be well. When the word comes faire & full upon the conscience of a man and would pierce his heart, and reach him in every place as the angell did *Satan*, he will have some fetch or other to put by the word, and he saies; I hope for all this, the danger shall not fall upon me. Now the way that the soule useth to put by the word, and to prevent the danger threatened, appeares in these three particulars.

The first is this, how ever sinne is never so vile in it selfe, and he is guilty thereof, yet he thinks the God of heaven doth not attend to his finnes, or else he is not so just or righteous that he will punish

2. Shift.

How the soule
puts by the
threatnings of
the word.

1.

punish him for them. Indeed, if he were some notorious wretch, as a murderer, or an adulterer or a thief, or such like, then he had cause to feare, but God will not bring him to an account for every smal sin, That this is the sleight of the soule, I will shew you; and then shew you how to avoid it.

Job. 12. 13.

It is ordinary with every carnall heart more or lesse, to reason as *Eliphaz* with *Job*, *How doth God know? can he judge through the darke? thicke clondes are a covering to him that he seeth not, he walketh in the circuits of heaven.* It is the guise of wicked men to say so; Nay, it is that which the hearts of Gods people are driven to a stand withall, when they consider the passages of wicked men, now God seeth them and doth not punish them, they say, *How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Almighty?* When the *Prophet* saw the way of the wicked to prosper, their eyes to start out with fannesse, he saith, *Doth God see this, and not punish it?* as if he had said, Did God care for all that is done here below, could he brooke such strange oppositions of his word and his gospel and his members? I doubt not, but that there is many an adulterous heart, that thinkes a darke night shall cover all his abominations; and the malicious man that contrives evill against Gods children he thinkes that God considers not his course; or else that God will not trouble himself to execute Judgement upon him for all his sinnes. As the *Prophet* saith, *The Lord will not doe Good nor Evil; he is marvelous quiet,*

et,

er, he will not trouble himselfe neither for the good that doth befall, nor for the evill that is deserved by us; Nay, this is the bane of our ministry, when people heare of many Judgements denounced against sinne and sinners: (I tell you what they thinke of all this) they thinke they are words of course. If the adulterer or drunkard did consider that no such person should inherit the kingdome of heaven, durst they goe on? Surely no. But they thinke they are but the words of some hot spirited minister, to awe, and scare men and keepe them in compasse, and they will not be perswaded, but God is more mercifull then so, that he should punish for every small sinne, they thinke this is more then reasonable; *Let him make speede (saith the wicked) that we may see it, and let the Counsell of the most High draw nigh, that we may know it.* As if they had said, You ministers tell us much of Gods wrath against *Jerusalem*, let us see those enemies; and let the word of the Lord come to passe now, all these words are but winde, &c. These are the carnall cavills of gracelesse persons. To which I answer, It is desperate ignorance and marvelous Atheisme of heart, whereby the devill labours to keepe men in sin; *the Lord knowes thy thoughts long before,* if thou wouldest hide thy selfe from the Lord in the darke, the day and the night are all one with him; nay, the Lord will search *Jerusalem with candles*, the word in the originall signifies to tracke her; Nay, he will not leave searching till he finde thee out; *for the wayes of man are before the Lord, and he*

Esay. 5. 19.

Zeph. 1. 12.

Prov. 5. 22.

1. Iohn 3. 20.

Psal. 50.

Rom. 2. 14.
Iude. 15.

ponder all his doings, and if our hearts condemne us, God knoweth all things, and is greater then our hearts. Doth thy Conscience checke thee for vaine thoughts, and cursed devices? then God knoweth much more by thee then thou knowest by thy selfe. God did see *Achan* stealing the wedge of Gold, and *David* in his adultery; and he seeth all the malice of thy heart against his Saints; and all thy uprising of heart against Gods word; Nay, the Lord seeth all the pranks of the adulterer in the darkest night; and God is iust to bring all things to judgement; and thee also to an account for them; In vaine it is for wicked men to digge deepe, to hide their counsell from the Lord: These things hast thou done (said God) and I kept silence, and therefore thoughtest I was altogether such a one as thy selfe, but I will reprove thee, and set all thy sinnes in order before thee.

You must not thinke God is so gentle, No, he will set all your sinnes in order before you, if not here for your humiliation, yet hereafter for your everlasting confusion; the drunkard shall then see all his pot companions, and the adulterer his mates, and the unjust person all his trickes, nay, God wil not bate thee one thought of thy heart; be where you will, God will finde you out with his judgements, and say, Lo, here is thy pride, & here is thy murder, & here are all thy abominations, this is the wretch that could carry fire in the one hand and water in the other; these are thy sinnes, and this shall be thy punishment.

Secondly, if God be so mighty (say they) that he

he knowes all, and will call us to an accompt for all; then it is but sorrowing so much the more; and that we will doe afterwards, and this will make all well enough; it is but repenting. To this I answer, Doe you make a but at it; be not deceived *God is not*; nay, cannot be mocked, and therefore delude not your owne soules, every repentance will not serve the turne; thou mayest have remorse of heart, and repent; and cry to God for thy sinnes; and this tormenting of thy heart will be but a forerunner of thy everlasting damnation hereafter: the Lord may deale with thee as *Moses* said of the people of *Israel*, *You returned and wept before the Lord, but he would not hearken to your voice.* So the time may come that all weeping and wailing will not serve the turne. You see *Judas* wept and brought backe the thirty pieces of silver, he had marvelous horrour of Conscience, he tooke shame to himselfe, and made restitution; and yet a damned creature for ever.

Thou that thinkest it such an easie matter, aske thy owne heart this question: Canst thou bee content to lay open all thy cursed sinfull courses, and all the wrong that thou hast done; Consider what a hard matter it is to bring thy heart to it; to confesse all thy close adulteries; and when thou hast done all this, thou mayest be as farre from salvation as *Judas* was, who went and hanged himselfe; therefore it is not every sorrow will serve the turne, and bring comfort to thy soule; but it must be repentance of the right stampe; And againe, dost thou thinke thou hast

Object.

Answ.

Dent. 1. 14.

Mat. 17. 3.

2 Tim. 2. 25, 26

3.
Quest.

Answ.

Revel. 1. 21, 22.

repentance at command, this is that which cures the throat of mens soules, and deprives them of all the benefit of the meanes of grace; thou art not sure though thou shalt live, thou hast power of thy selfe to repent savingly; and shall any man be so senselesse, as to hang his happinesse on that which cannot help him? If thou didst consider thy owne weakenesse, thou wouldest not say that repentance is in thine owne power. Remember what the *Apostle* saith, *Proving if peradventure at any time God would give repentance, that they may acknowledge the truth, and come to amendment of life out of the snares of the Devill.* It is onely but *peradventure*, it is a rare worke, and few have it.

Thirdly, some will say, God may give me repentance, Christ came into the world to save sinners, and why may he not save me? I answer, is that all? is it come to this? and who knows but that God may damne thee too? if that be all, why may you not say more truly, what know I, but that God may give me up to a hard heart, and a blinde minde for ever, and I may for ever be cast out of the presence of God? is it but, *it may be all this while?* And therefore for a full answer, consider these two things to shake off this carnal security, whereby men resolve to pin their salvation Gods mercy, though they purpose to oppose his mercy. First, know this, that there is a time when God will not shew mercy. Behold, saith God, *I gave her a time of repentance, but she repented not, therefore I will cast her upon the bed of sickness: and as our Saviour saith to Ierusalem, Oh that thou hadst*

hadst knowne in this thy day, the things belonging to thy peace; but now they are hid from thy eyes. God had sealed up his mercy, and the day of salvation was past, and when the day is over, though Noah, Daniel, and Iob, should pray for a people they should save neither sonne nor daughter; And if thy father did pray for thee that art a childe; if mercy be past, the Lord will not spare that man saith the text; as if the Lord had said, I have abundance of mercy but thou shalt never tast of it, nay, for ought I know, the Lord may set a scale of condemnation upon thee, and so give thee over to all evill, to all sinne, to all curses; and blot out thy name from under heaven; Are you yet perswaded that this is Gods word? if you were but perswaded of the sorrow some have had, it would make you looke about you; The Wise man saith, that wisdom professeth to poure out abundance of mercy, saying, Oh you simple ones, how long will you contemne and despise puritie and holinesse?

Luke. 19. 43.

Ezek. 14. 14.

Prov. 2. 38.

Now marke, when a people hath had this mercy, and wisdom offered to them, and yet they will despise it; then shall the cry, and call, but I will not answere, (saith God) they shal seeke me early, but shall not finde me. The period of Gods patience is come to an end, and there is no expectation of mercy; call, and call, you may, but God will not heare you; you whose consciences flie in your faces, & tel you, that you have despised mercy, & you would none of Gods Counsells, & you hate the knowledge of his wayes, Do you think to get it now by crying, when the date of mercy is out?

No, no, you would have none of Gods mercy before, and now he will none of you; Doe you think it fit, that grace, and mercy, and the spirit, should still stand and waite upon you, and strive, and alwayes be despised? Is it not marvellous just that that word which you have despised, should never worke more; and that mercy, you have refused should never be offered to you any more? It is just, and you shall finde it so in the end, and take heed the termes of mercy be not out.

4.

Lastly, if we cannot avoyde it, then we are resolved to beare it as we may; if we be damned, we shall undergoe it as we are able. This is that we poore ministers finde too often by woefull experience, that when we have taken away all cavills from wicked men; and then if we could weepe over them, and mourne for them, and beseech them to consider of it aright; Marke what they say, Good sir, spare your paines, we are sinners, and if we be damned, then every rub must stand upon his owne bottom; we will beare it as well as we can. What, is the winde in that doore? Is that all you can say? O woe to thee that ever thou wert borne! O poore creature! if I should cease speaking, & all of us joyne together in weeping and lamenting thy condition, it were the best course; It is impossible thou shouldest ever beare Gods wrath with any comfort. And let these three considerations be remembered & retained, which will make any man come to a stand, even the vilest wretches who will blaspheme and swear, and if they be damned (they say) they have

have borne something, and they will also beare this as well as they can.

First, judge the Lyon by the pawe, judge the torments of hell by some little beginnings of it; and the dregges of Gods vengeance, by some little sippes of it; And judge how unable thou art to beare the whole by thy inabilityie to beare a little of it in this life: In the terrour of conscience (as the Wiseman saith) *a wounded spirit who can beare?* When God layes the flashes of hell fire upon thy soule, thou canst not indure it; what soever a man can inflict upon a poore wretch may be borne, but when the *Almighty* comes in *bataile array* against a poore soule, how can he undergoe it? witnesse the *Saints* that have felt it, as also witnesse the wicked themselves that have had some beginnings of hell in their consciences. When the Lord hath let in a little horror of heart into the soule of a poore sinfull creature, how is he transported with an insupportable burthen? *When it is day, he wisheth it were night, and when it is night, he wisheth it were day.* All the friends in the world cannot comfort him, nay many have sought to hang themselves, to doe any thing rather then to suffer a little vengeance of the *Almighty*: And one man is roaring and yelling, as if he were now in hell already, and admits of no comfort: If the droppe be so heavy, what will the whole sea of Gods vengeance be? If he cannot beare the one, how can he beare the other?

Secondly, consider thine owne strength, and

Iob. 6. 19.

compare it with all the strength of the creatures, and so if all the creatures be not able to beare the wrath of the Almighty, (as Iob saith, *Is my strength the strength of stones, or is my flesh as brasse that must beare thy wrath?*) As if he had said, It must be a stone, or brasse, that must beare thy wrath. Though thou wert as strong as brasce or stones, thou couldst not beare it; when the mountaines tremble at the wrath of the Lord) shall a poore worme or bubble, and a shadow endure it?

Conceive thus much, if all the diseases in the world did sease on one man, and if all the torments that all the tyrants in the world could devise, were cast upon him; and if all the creatures in heaven and earth did conspire the destruction of this man; and if all the devils in hell did labour to inflict punishments upon him; you would thinke this man to be in a miserable condition. And yet all this is but a beame of Gods indignation. If the beames of Gods wrath be not hot, what is the full sunne of his wrath, when it shall sease upon the soule of a sinfull creature in full measure?

3.

The third consideration is this: Nays, yet if thou thinkest to lift up thy self above al creatures and to beare more then they all; then set before thine eyes the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ; he that creats the heavens and upholds the whole frame thereof, when the wrath of God came up on him, onely as a surety; he cries out with his eyes full of teares, and his heart full of sorrow, and

and the heavens full of lamentations, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Oh thou poore creature, if thou hast the heart of a man, gird up the loines of thy mind, and see what thou canst doe? Dost thou thinke to beare that which the Lord Jesus Christ could not beare with so much sorrow? Yet he did indure it without any sinne or weaknesse; he had three sippes of the *Cuppe*, and every one of them did sinke his soule; and art thou, a poore sinfull wretch, able to beare the wrath of God for ever? Now (beloved) seeing all objections are answered, and the things made plaine, labour to do that which you may have comfort in; Submit your selves to the good word of the Lord, and not only be willing and content to be thus enlightened, but labour for it, that thou maiest prevent the Judgements deserved by the same.

Mat. 27. 46.

Now that I may the better prevaile with you, consider these three motives, first, it is the only old way to heaven, for God never revealed any other but this way in the old law: the only way for the *leaper* to be cleansed was to come out into the congregation and to cry, *I am uncleane, I am uncleane*. This *leaper* was every sinner; this meane of curing was the sight of his sinne, and as he did, so must every sinner confesse his sin, take shame to himselfe, and say, It is my proud heart, and this my loose life, &c. This true sight of sinne is the only doore to life and salvation, who would not goe that way which is the right & the ready way, if ever you receive mercy at the hands of the

Motive 1.

of. 1. 2. 3.

the Lord, it must be by this way, or not at all. I pray you take heed, and doe not find a shorter cut to heaven; the further you goe the contrary way, the further you must returne back againe; this hath cozened many a man more then he doth imagine.

As a traveller when he is loath to goe through some filthy lane, he will breake through the fence and goe through the meadow, that he may save the soule way, at last when he hath gone up and downe and cannot get out againe, he is forced with much losse of time to goe backe againe, and goe through the lane. So it is with many sinfull wretches in the world, and this hath cost them deare. They will not goe this way, by sorrow for sinne to see the filthinesse thereof, and their cursed abominations, but they will have a new way to receive mercy & comfort from God, yet at last they are driven to a stand, and then they will heare the minister of God, and when he saith, Christ came to *seek and to save that which was lost*, that is, those poore sinners that saw themselves *lost*; and consider the plagues of their heart; And when Christ workes savingly, he opens the eye and awakens the conscience, and a man must confesse before he can find mercy, then the soule saith, I never saw this worke upon my soule, I was never lost. No? where broke you over then? you would needs to heaven a new way, you are like the thorny ground that would receive the word with joy, Nay, He assure you, you must come backe againe, and see all those abominations

Luke 19.10.

ons which have been committed in secret by you and discover them, or else there is no meanes to come unto life; *Let us search & try our ways* (saith the Church.) you must not thinke that Christ will pardon all, and you doe nothing. No, first see your sinnes, and then you shall receive mercy & pardon for them.

Lament. 3. 40.

Secondly, the worke by this meanes will bee much more easie then at another time. If thou once get thy conscience convicted and thine eyes opened, the worke will goe on clearely and easily; Many of Gods people will strike in with you, and many good Christians will pittie you, and pray for you, and you shall have many helps this way, and therefore is it not better now to have your conscience awakened when you may have helpe, then afterward when there is no remedy? When any of Gods people fast or pray, they will remember you; what saith one? Doe you know such a man? yes very well: what is he? oh he was the most shamelesse drunkard that ever the sun did see, or the earth beare. Was he so? oh but now God hath opened his eyes, and awakened his conscience, he was never so frolike before, but now he is as much wounded, now his heart is broken, & his conscience flies in his face, It were good to remember him, though he hath beene a wretch and a profest opposer of Gods people, yet let us remember him; Yes that I will, I know his burthen is great, I have found it, and I hope so long as I have a knee to kneele and a tongue to speake I shal remember him. And then they pray
for.

Motive 2.

for him and say, Good Lord, who can beare a wounded soule? Good Lord thou hast humbled him and made him see himselfe vile and miserable, let him see thy mercy in Christ. What a comfort is this to have a whole countrey pray for him in this manner.

Obj. II.

But some will object and say, This is something dangerous and drives men sometimes to a desperate stand, and therefore is it not farre better to be as we are, and not to awake this severe Lion; A man cannot conjure downe his conscience when it is up once.

Ans.

To this I answer, you must see your sinnes that is the truth of it, doe not thinke to put it off, the Lyon will roare, and that conscience will be awakened one day, it is better to be awakened now, then to have your eyes opened in hell when there is no remedy.

Motive 3.

Thirdly, set upon this worke, the issue will be very successfull: oh what a comfort will it be to a poore soule in the time of death, when he shall come to render up his soule into the hands of God, that all his sinnes are wiped out: And then to heare those glad tidings from heaven, Be of good comfort poore soule, thou hast seen thy sinnes, therefore I will not see them; thou hast remembered them and mourned for them, therefore I will never plague thee for them. Who would not see his sinnes that Christ may cover them in that day of accompts? there was never sinner broken hearted but God did bind him up; and there was never any truly wounded for sinne but

but God did ever heale and comfort him; and therefore labour to looke your face in the glasse of Gods Law, and so see your owne spots, I confesse this is tedious to your sinnes; & the plagues due to them; but looke thou on them that God may not; If an adversary offer meanes of agreement, we use to say, suffer it not to come to the publike triall; for the case is naught; I say it will be so with every wicked mans case; the Lord hath a controversie with every wicked man, and it must be tryed in the publike day of judgment, or else you must make a private agreement betweene God and your owne soules. If there be any drunkard, or adulterer, or unjust person, that is guiltie of any sinne, you had better take up the matter in private: Doe not feare to looke upon your sins, but bring the all out before the Lord, and see the ugly face of them; and intreate the Lord to seale up unto you the pardon of them, that you may never be called to an accompt for them; I tell you, it is the most comfortable course in the world.

The last use for instruction to all my fellow brethren: let me speake a word to them and to my selfe too; let us all take that course in dealing with the people, and Gods ordinances, which God himselfe takes up; As the steward disposeth of every thing at his masters will, and the Apothecary orders drugges as the Physitian appoints, so let it be with us to, we are but stewards and Apothecaries; let us take that course, and use those meanes that God hath appointed for his

use.

use.

use.

The Soules preparation

1. Cor. 3. 2.

Mat. 7. ult.

his peoples good; God saith, you must see your
 finnes, and be humbled for them: and therefore
 let us labour to make men see them. (as the A-
 postle saith; *I hope we were made manifest to your*
Consciences; Did not your Consciences say so,
 that you could not gaine say it? we must take up
 that course the Scripture hath revealed, and
 which the faithfull servants of God have ever
 used, and which God hath ever blessed: nay, it is
 our wisdom so to doe. *Matthew* the seventh and
 the last, Christ taught the people with *authority*,
 not as the *Scribes*: there is a kind of commanding
 power which the word ought to have upon mens
 Consciences, if a man be a sinner it will reprove
 him, and command reproofes to cease upon him;
 and if he be in distresse of Conscience, it will
 command comfort to take place in his heart. *Now*
 Give me leave to speake my thoughts, and it
 is my judgement too: What doth it profit a
 man to scrape up a little Greek and Latine toge-
 ther, and to leave the sense of the Scripture un-
 discovered, and the Conscience no whit touch-
 ed, nor the heart stirred? He that knowes any
 thing this way, though he were but an ordinary
 schoole-boy, that had but any skill in the tongues,
 if he could not doe it, he should be scourged by
 my consent. But let it be in case of Conscience
 a poore soule comes to anguish of spirit, the one-
 ly way to set this man on foote againe, is to an-
 swer all his objections and questions, and resolve
 all his doubts, and to make the way good and
 the case cleare; Alas this course is not knowne
 amongst

amongst us : And in the way of examination,
if a man come to examine a sinner, he takes away
all his cavils, and all his carnall shifts, that he hath
to hinder the word, and forces the soule to say,
It is Gods word, though he will not entertaine
it. Let a man try this course and he shall finde a
marvellous difficulty, this is the reason why our
ministry thrives not, and the hearts of men are
not wrought upon, because we labour not the
right way, to shew men their sinnes, and to con-
vince their conscience, that they may not flinch
out from the ordinances of God. Nay, I take it
to be the speciall cause why after all the precious
promises that God makes knowne, no man re-
ceives good by them. We offer salves to them
that know not whether they have any sores or
no, And we offer Physicke to those that we
know not whether they have any disease or no, we
speake of grace & Christ, but people thinke they
have no need of the, suffer me to speake my mind
herein freely. That ministry which doth not
ordinarily humble the soule & breake the heart,
doth not convert and draw to Christ, but that
ministry that doth not enlighten the mind
and convince the soule of sinne, that never hum-
bles ordinarily, and therefore never doth draw
home to Christ.

Now we come to shew the causes why, and the
meanes how sinners come to see their sinnes. The
Apostle speakes it to their faces, *You are they that*
have committed this sinne, you have crucified the
Lord of life, this is your sinne &c. but hee doth not say
The

Why mens
hearts are not
wrought upon
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stery

Doctrinc.

Wm. ydW
son of the
qu. ydW
in the
Luk. 3. 11. 12.

1 King. 20. 27.

The Doctrine from hence is this: A speciall application of particular finnes is a chiefe meanes to bring people to a sight of their finnes and to a true sorrow for them. The *Apostle* doth not generally propound their sins, but he comes home to their hearts, and it is not onely done in this place, but it hath bene the practice of all Gods faithfull ministers heretofore, As *Iohn Baptist*, he goes not cunningly to worke, secretly to intimate some truths, but he deales roundly with them, and saith, *O generation of vipers, who were warned you to flee from the wrath to come?* And he shewes them their finnes in particular. And when the *publicans* came to be baptised, he saith, *Receive no more then is appointed for you*, and he saith to the souldiers, *Do violence to no man, and be content with your wages*, he was the minister of humiliation and preparation: and therefore he deales thus plainly with them.

When *Ahab* had slaine *Naboth*, the *Prophet Elias* came to him and sayes, *In the place where dogs lick the blood of Naboth shall dogges lick thy blood*: *Ahab* said, *Hast thou found me out O my enemy?* And he said, *I have found thee out, because thou hast sought thy selfe to work wickednesse in the sight of the Lord*, and the text saith, *When he heard this, he put on sacke-cloth and went softly*: This was the power of a particular reproofe, though he were a miserable wicked man. Thus did *Paul* deale with *Peter*, when he halted before the Jewes, he did plainly reprove him to his face, and that not secretly, but because he had sinned openly, therefore he re-
proves

proves him openly; so also our Saviour Christ shakes up the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*. And this is the rule in generall, as the Apostle saith, *Reprove the sharply, that they may be found in the faith.*

Oh! but some will say. If I doe thus plainly deale with them, I shall discourage them altogether.

Nay, it will make them sound Christians indeed; see what the Lord saith, *Plead with your mother*: the word in the originall is, *Call her in to the Court*, call her by her name, and say, that thee is not my wife, and I am not her husband. And the Lord saith by *Ezekiel*, *Son of man, cause Ierusalem to know her abominations*: he doth not say, cause the country to know her abominations, or the country to know the sins of the court, but make Jerusalem know her owne abominations.

The reasons are these: First, because the word thus applyed hits sooner then otherwise it would. A master commands a servant to do such a thing, & because he names him not, one thinkes it is not he, and another it is not he, only because he is not named: So when a minister saith, *in many things we sinne all*, he hits no man, and so none are affected with it; But now particular application brings every mans part and portion, and not only sets the dish afore him, but cuts him meat, and carves for him, and we doe in this cause as the nurse doth with the child; she not onely sets the meat before it, but she minceth it, and puts it into the childs mouth: the steward doth not onely say, There is meat enough in the market, but he buyes it, and brings it home, and

F

sees

Mat. 23. 13.
14.

Titus 1. 20.
Object.

Answer.

Hosea 2. 1.

Ezek. 16. 1.

2. 12. 28. 14.

Reason 1.

2. 12. 28. 14.

sees it prepared, and gives direction what is for every one. The words of a faithfull minister are like arrowes, which if they be shot a cocke height they fall down againe and do nothing: but when a man levels at a marke, then, if ever, he wil hit it. So, many ministers can tell a grave faire tale, and speake of sinnes in generall, and these common reproofes, these intimations of sinne, are like arrowes shot a cocke height, they touch no man; but when a minister makes application of sin in particular, and saith, O all you drunkards and adulterers, this is your portion, and let this be as venome in your hearts to purge out your lusts. When our Saviour Christ lapped up the *Pharises* all in one speech, it is said, that they heard the *parable* and knew that he meant them.

Overly discourfes that they are sinners and great sinners in other countries, and you should doe well to looke to your wayes and the like: These are like the confused noise that was in the ship when *Jonah* was asleep in it, which never troubled him, at last the Master commeth and saith, *Arise, O Sleeper, and call upon thy God*. And as a father observes, they came about him, and every man had a blow at him, and then he did awake. So because of generall reproofes of sin, & termes a farre off, men come here, and sit and sleepe, and are not touched nor troubled at all. But when particular application commeth home to the heart, and a minister saith, this is thy drunkenesse, and thy adulteric and prophanenesse, and this will breake thy necke one day, what assurance

Mat. 21. 45.

Jonah .1. 6.

rance hast thou got of Gods mercy? and what canst thou say for heaven? Then men beginne to looke about them. There was never any convicting Ministry nor any man that did in plainnes apply the word home, but their people would be reformed by it, or else their consciences would be troubled and desperately provoked to oppose God and his ordinances, that they may be plagued by it. The word of God is like a sword, the explanation of the text is like the drawing out of this sword, and the flourishing of it: and so long it never hits: But when a man strikes a full blow at a man, it either wounds or puts him to his fêce: so the application of the word is like the striking with the sword, it will worke one way or other, if a man can fence the blow, so it is: I confesse it is beyond our power to awaken the heart, but ordinarily this way doth good.

Secondly, as the word of God particularly applied hits soonest, so it sinckes deepest; the words of the wise are compared to *nayles fastened by the masters of assemblies*; the doctrine delivered is like the *nayles* pointed; but when it is cleare, and then particularly applied, it is like the setting on the *nayles* fast upon the hearts and consciences of men. And this I take to be the reason why many that have come many times to oppose the ministers of the Gospell, yet God hath broken in upon them, and humbled their hearts & made them see their miserable condition.

Gather up all then, if a plaine and particular application of the word hits the heart soonest & sincks

Reason 2.

Use 1.

sinks deepest into the heart, then it is a speciall meanes to worke a sight of sinne, and affect the heart with sorrow for it; But the former part is true: Therefore the latter cannot be denied.

The first use is for instruction; Here we finde the reason why plaine teaching findes such opposition, why it is so cavilled at by all ministers & others; because thereby the eye of the soule comes to be opened, and all a mans abominations are discovered, and his conscience is pinched by the same; Our Saviour saith, *He that doth evil, hates the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd*, as a theefe hates the light and the lantern-bearer, because they shew his villany; so they that are guilty of many sinfull courses, and base practises, hate the minister that brings the word with any power to their soules. A malefactor at the Assises can be content to see an hundred men in the towne and is never troubled with them; but if he sees one man that comes to give in evidence against him, and knowes his practises; Oh how his heart riseth with desperate indignation against that man. Oh saith he, this is he that seekes my life, he will make my necke cracke; so it is with this soule saving ministry, it is that which brings in a bill of inditement against a man. Now a man can be content to come, and heare though it be never so many sermons; but if a minister comes in for a witnes against him, and begins to arraigne him, and to indite him, for his pride, and malice, and covetousnesse, and to convince him of them, and to lay him flat before the Lord, & his conscience,

Oh

Oh then he is not able to beare it. What is the reason of this? He can heare others quietly, and say, oh they are sweet men, they deale kindly and comfortably. Why? The masse bites not, (as the proverbe is) such a kind of ministry workes not at all, and this is the reason why they are not troubled, but goe away so well contented. I have sometime admired at this: why a company of Gentlemen, yeomen, and poore women, that are scarcely able to know their A. B. C. Yet they have a minister to speake Latine, Greeke, and Hebrew, and to use the Fathers, when it is certaine, they know nothing at all. The reason is, because all this stings not, they may sit and sleep in their sinnes, and go to hell hoodwinckt, never awakened, and that is the reason they will well come such to their houses, and say, oh he is an excellent man, I would give any thing I might live under his ministry. It is just *Ahab's* old humour, he could sure seasonably with *four hundred false Prophets*, and if there had beene five thousand more, they should all have been accepted of him, but when *Iehosaphat* said, Is there never another *Prophet* of the Lord; Oh yes (saith *Ahab*) *there is one Micaiah, but I hate him, he never spake good to me* that is, he never sooths me up. So it was the temper of the people mentioned in the *Acts*, when the *Apostle* saw they were a rebellious people, he deales plainly with them: but they cryed, *Away with such a fellow, he is not worthy to live.* What? said they, then it seemes we shall be cast off from the Lord and be his people no more,

1. Kings 14.

they were not able to beare that : people in this case deale with Gods faithfull ministers as the widdow of Sarepta did, whē the Prophet had told her that the *meale in the barrell and the oyle in the cruse should not decrease*; all this while he was welcome : but when her child was dead, *Oh what have I to doe with thee thou man of God?* thinking indeed that the Prophet had killed her sonne; So all the while we set the doores open wide that all the drunkards and adulterers in the country may goe to heaven, you like us well enough, and we are as welcome as may be, and we are marvellous good preachers, and you thinke us fit for the pulpit, but if we come once to lay sinne to your charge, and to threaten condemnation for it, & to say, If God be in heaven you shall never come there, if you continue in your sinnes, oh then they are up in armes, and say as the widdow did, *Are you come to slay our soules, and awaken our consciences?* beloved, this argues a spirit that never found the power of the word; But it is our duties and we must doe it, and howsoever it is not accepted of the wicked, yet it shall finde entertainment with God, and he shall give us our reward at that great day.

Use 2.

Secondly, it is a word of reproofe, suffer me to deale plainly in this kinde, if particular application be so powerfull, and so profitable, let me speake a word to my selfe, and to my fellow-brethren: It falls heavy on us that are not willing to practise the same, but rather oppose it in others that desire to doe it, this plain and particular applicati-

plication, is accounted a matter of fillinesse, and want of wisdom, and rashnesse, and a thing which befits not a pulpit, but a mans words must be sweet, and toothsome, and he must have a tender hand over men whosoever they be, be they never so prophane. Nay, I dare say, if the Devill himselfe were here, he must not be troubled, ministers must lay bolsters under mens heads, and sow pillowes under their elbowes, that they may sit easily, and not trouble drunkards, and adulterers, but let them be still in their sins, and so let them goe downe to hell, this is that which the Devill loves and takes much content in. And it is certaine, if he could prevaile, no other course should be taken up: if a great man be present, or a patron that we looke for a living from, (if my eares had not heard it, I could not have beleaved it) it is strange to thinke how they darbe this over. If their sinnes be so grosse that all the Congregation would cry shame, if he did not reprove them, what will they say? reprove you we will not, we dare not, but beseech you and desire you as every man hath his infirmitie, a word to the wise is sufficient, &c. I blame my selfe so farre as my base feare possesseth me, but brethren, what will become of preaching in conclusion, if this may take no place in the hearts of people; and yet notwithstanding all this, there is one thing to be considered, if there be but any upright hearted minister, or sincere Christian that is more exact then ordinary, what will the carnall ministers doe, though they have no rea-

son in the text, no ground in the word, to warrant them? though they cannot condemne a poore Christian upon good grounds, yet they will invent new wayes, and wrest the Text to dishonour Gods name, and then in all bitterness they can vent themselves against faithfull Christians, and conscionable ministers: and hence the hands of the wicked are strengthened, and the hearts of Gods people are much daunted, and the Gospell of Jesus Christ prevailes not in the heart of such as it is preached unto.

2. Tim. 4. 1.

Let us see what it is that God requires of us, marke the severe charge and command that the Apostle gives his scholar *Timothy*, *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Iesus Christ, who shall Iudge the quicke and the dead, preache the word, be instant in season, and out of season, reprove, rebuke, (as if he had said) the stubborne hearts of men need this specially, reprovng, and therefore doing this, is the maine thing that God requires, and the maine end for which the word serves. Sharp reproofes makes sound Christians.* He that heales overly, hurts more then he heales, are there not many to be humbled? and are there not many lusts raigning in the hearts of men and women? Let us therefore throw away this shamfull hiding, and make our ministry knowne to the soules of those to whom we speake.

Titus. 12. 13.

Object.

But some will object against this preaching, that it is nothing but the rashnes of mens spirits, a kind of rayling that fits not a pulpit.

Answ.

To this I answer, the Prophets of God ever

used

used and practised it; and the holy *Apostles* which were inspired in an extraordinarie measure of the spirit, did imitate Christ, and his Prophets: and God commanded *Esay* to lift up his voice, as a trumpet, and shew my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sinnes.

That is, tell the drunkard and adulterer of their sinnes? Did Christ and his Apostles raile? Are these men onely wise? Oh fearefull, that the soules of men should be so desperately transported against the truth of God, you that have had any such thoughts against the power of God, in the ministry of the word, repent, and pray, that if it be possible the words of your mouthes, and thoughts of your hearts may be forgiven. The Apostles, and Christ himselfe used this kind of teaching: *Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees*, seven times together, if Christ had now lived, you would have said, he had railed: Oh fearefull, I tell you this is the next sinne against the sinne of the holy Ghost.

Act. 8. 22

Ay, but Secondly, they object, in this last age of the world there is a difference to be put, it is true, if men were not taught this were necessary, but now in these times of knowledge what needs all this adoe? all those troubles and reproofes? what, shall we make men to be chamlings, to mince their meat for them? no, let their meate, set the word before them, and they are wise enough to take their meat, and to apply the word to themselves.

Object.

To this I answer three things, I confesse it is

Answer.

true

true, the Lord (blessed be his name) hath made
 his word more evidently knowne then formerly,
 and yet there is a great deale of knowledge wan-
 ting in the most sort of men; nay, I can speake it
 by experience, that the meaner ordinary sort of
 people, it is incredible and unconceivable, what
 Ignorance is among them; Nay, I will be bold
 to justifie it, that he that thinkes himselfe the
 wisest in understanding, if we come home to him
 by way of examination, we shall make it known,
 to him that he knowes little or nothing of which
 he should and ought to know. But Imagine
 men had the knowledge of the word, that is not
 the maine end of preaching, to instruct men:
 but to worke upon their hearts. When a man
 hath taught men what they should doe, he is but
 come to the walls of the Castle; the fort is in the
 heart, the greatest worke of the ministry is to
 pull downe the wills of men, that know the *truth*
of God and *hold it in unrighteousnesse*: Nay, they
 that doe know it, how dull are they in the per-
 formances of these duties God calles for at their
 hands, so that we had not onely need to mince
 their meat for them, but even to put it into their
 mouthes; nay, they sleepe with meat in their
 mouthes; I appeale to you that are inlightned in
 the knowledge of the truth, doe you not finde
 dulnesse of minde, and indisposednesse of spirit
 in the performances of those duties God calls for
 at your hands? It was spoken by a reverend Di-
 vine, that the freest horse needs sometimes a spur
 to pricke him forward, so I say, the best Christian
 needs

needs a sharpe reproofe to pricke him forward in a Christian course.

But thirdly, if reason cannot prevaile, they dash this preaching out of countenance, and say, when men want matter to make up their sermons, then they ransacke mens consciences, and apply unto them their particular sinnes, and so they make up their sermons.

3.

Object.

Answ.

To this I answer againe, then our Saviour *Iesus Christ* wanted matter, he presseth their faults to the *Scribes* and *Pharises* seven times together, nay, in the sixth of *John* he presseth on truth nine times, his aime and end was, namely, that he was the bread of life, he followeth it and setleth it on them. Now in these mens judgements, Christ wanted matter, he had not wherewith to spend the time, & therefore he spake to the hearts of men, and came home to their Consciencess; but to say the truth, the ground of their cavills that are cast against this kinde of preaching is, because this troubles the hearts of those to whom we speak, & brings vexation to the soules. Do we want matter for our preaching? no, but this I say, it is an easie matter for any man to observe truths out of a text, & to lay forth a point; this is an easie thing for any one that hath a judgement inlightned in the Scripture, but for a minister of God in the worke of examination to drive the soule of a carnall man to a stand, that he cannot escape, to make him goe away and hang the wings, in so much that the soule shall be humbled, or else goe away and snarle at the truth, and

and reproofe delivered. Or for a man to uphold a soule in the time of trouble, to comfort it, and take away all doubts, I say this is the hardest matter for a minister to accomplish under the Sunne, in the worke of the ministry, I speake for these two passages, that all the world may know what belongs to the worke of the ministry; and also that al the world may know if men take any distaste at this kinde of preaching, we care not, it is our dutie.

Use 3.

The third use is, for exhortation, if this be our duty, it ought to stirre up the heart of all the people of God, to set an edge on their affections, that they should desire this manner of teaching, and when God maketh his truth thus knowne to us, we should submit to the power thereof, You have most need of this, and there is most profit in this; and therefore your hearts ought to be more enlarged to the coveting and submitting thereto.

How to profit
in hearing the
word preached.

And therefore you that are hearers, suffer me to provoke you to it, when the time comes that you are to approach to the house of God; pray unto the Lord that he would direct you, and that the minister may come home to your hearts, bring your hearts to the word, as the people did their sacrifices in the old law; they brought them and laid them on the Altar, that the Priest might kill them; and divide them. So bring your hearts under the power of Jesus Christ, that they may be cut and divided, that you may be let blood in the right veine, that your corruptions may bee subdued,

subdued, that they may have their deaths wound given them; take up that resolution of the Prophet David, *I will heare what the Lord saith to my soule*. I will not heare what the Levite saith to the Courtier, or to the commons, but I will see what the Lord saith to *me*. Oh (say some) the minister speakes home to such a one, he touched him to the quicke: What is that to thee? Will anothers mans salve cure thee? therefore labour that the Lord may come home to thy particular, that the Lord may salve thee, and cure thee, and save thee, for thy everlasting comfort.

Psalme 58.8.

You are wise for the things of this life, you will be content to part with any thing that may procure your comfort; if a father were now on his death bed making his will, every child would thinke, what doth my father give me? For if a man be bidden to a Feast, he is not content only to have the meate set before him, but if the master of the feast will carve for him, he will take it kindly; Every faithfull minister is the father of the people, and they are his children, they are the Stewards of the Lords house, and give to every one their portion, terrour to whom terrour belongs, and comfort to whom comfort belongs.

Therefore when you come into the congregation, and see the minister giving and parting to every one his dole, reproofe here, and instruction there; looke up to heaven and labour to get something to thy owne particular, and say as *Esay* did in another case, *something for me*, Lord *something for me*, instruct me, reprove me, make
knowne

knowne my finnes, and discover my abominations, when the dainties of salvation are distributing.

2 Sam. 14. 25.

You that are at the lower end of the table, thinke with your selves, will the dish never come to the lower end? Oh that the Lord would now guide the minister, to lay his hand on the fore of this cursed infidelitie of minde? Oh, that the Lord would knocke downe that sinne of mine this day; And if thy heart be any whit inlightened and touched, thou wilt be much contented and comforted; as *David* said to *Abigail* when shee came to dissuade him from going against *Nabal* to destroy him, she said, *Vpon me my Lord be this iniquitie: why? Blessed be God (saith David) that sent thee this day to meet me, and blessed be thy counsell, which hath kept me this day from comming to shed blood and avenging my selfe.*

So if thou hast a good heart, thou wilt not goe away repynning and fretting at the word, and say, the minister meant me, & crosseth me, Take heed of this tempter of heart, and if God bee pleased to carve out to any man those particular fruits that concerne his good; goe away and blesse the Lord, & say, *blessed be his good word*, and his poore servant that met this day with my sins, I never observed that pride, I never observed that malice; I never discovered that carelesse, what became of Christ I cared not; what became of his ministers I respected not; what became of his name I regarded not; but the Lord hath shewed me my finnes, and blessed be God for that

that good worke which hath beene communicated to my soule by his servant,

And observe this, so farre as the heart is fearful that the minister should meet with his sins, so farre the heart is naught, Nay, if it be thus, if your consciences testifie against you that you are loath to have your sinnes dealt roundly withall; you thinke the ministers should be mild, and not use such bitter reprehensions, and sharpe reproofes: I beseech you thinke of it seriously, you deale with your sinnes in this kind as *David* did with *Absalon*: when *Isab* was to goe out, he gives him charge to use him kindly and gently; that is, do not kill him, but take him prisoner, that was his speech, *deale kindly for my sake with the young man Absalon.*

A naughty heart discovered.

2. Sam. 18. 6.

Dost thou deale so with thy sinnes? thou wouldest have the minister deal kindly with drunkenness and adultery and malice; do not kill drunkenness, but only take him prisoner, keep him in, reforme the outward face of drunkenness, that we may not be drunken in the open streets, but in a corner, and so that men may not sweare at every turne, but when they come among gentlemen, that they doe it cunningly.

The case is cleare, thy soule if it be of this temper, it never hated sinne, it never sorrowed for sinne, it never found the word of God working upon it for the subduing of sinne.

Imagine there were a traytor or rebell come into the towne, that sought to take away the Kings life, nay, suppose he were thy enemy or the

How to know
whether wee
hate sinne.

the like, will any one say that man hates an enemy, that cannot endure to have an enemy discovered, attached, and brought to execution? No sure, but he loves him, he covers him, he hides him, and would not have him knowne, he is a lover of a traitor, and a traitor himselfe? else why doe you harbour a traitor, you cover him that he cannot come to judgment, and therefore you are a friend unto him: so it is in this case, Canst thou say that thou hatest sinne, thou hatest malice, and covetousnesse, and loosenesse, and prophanesse, and in the meane time, thy soule saith, I cannot endure that the minister should discover these, I cannot endure that he should attach them, and arrest my soule for my covetousnesse and adultery and the like? My heart riseth and I would cover it, and hide it, nay I can beare it out sometimes and say, the traytor is not here, I am not the drunkard, I am not the adulterer you talke of; but if the minister will pursue thy soule, then thou shuttest the doore against him: If he thus with thee, I tell thee thou art a friend to the traytor, thou never hatedst thy sinne, thou wert never yet brought to a true fight or sorrow for it.

Wee will now proceed: *When they heard this* saith the text, the word in the originall caryeth a continual act, when they had heard, there was not an end, but the sting of the word did still stick in their hearts. *When they walked on the way, that* sounded in their eares, *I have crucified the Lord of life;* and when they lay downe, *that* came into their

their mindes, I have shed the blood of the Lord; and when they arose, this was their first thought, I have consented thereunto and imbrewed my hands therein, this sticke upon the spirits of the, and the sting of the truth would not away, but after they had heard it, it remained still in their hearts.

The doctrine is this, that serious meditation of our sinnes by the word of God is a speciall meanes to breake our hearts for our sinnes. After they had heard, (this notes a continuall action,) the truth of God still stuck in their stomackes, the arrows of God would not out, the *Apostle* shot some secret shot into their soules, which came home to their hearts and consciences, when they heard this: that is, the musing and meditating and pondering of this, when they could hold no longer, they could beare no more, but came to the *Apostles* and said, what shall we doe? Sometimes God brings a man into the Church to carpe at the minister, and to see what he may have against him; now if the Lord sting the conscience of that man, he will heare you all the weeke after, and say, me thinkes I see the man still, he aymed at me, he intended me, and me thinkes, I heare the word still sounding in mine eares, he is alwaies meditating on the word in this kind.

And a serious meditation of sinne discovered by the word is a speciall meanes to pierce the soule for the same, this is the power of meditation; when *David* had considered the glory of wicked men, how their eyes started out with farnes, and they

Doctrine.

Psalm 37

1. Pe. 2. 8.

which

Two things in
the word,

Mat. 14. 24.

Lament. 3. 19-
20.

Lament. 3.

had more then heart could wish; and who but they in the world? they were not troubled, they were not molested; then he thought they were the only men in the world; when he had considered and mused of this, it pierced his soule, and he was vexed with it, this went to the very intrailles of him, and therefore that place is marvelous pregnant. It was the meanes whereby Lot was so touched with the abominations of Sodom, that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing & hearing, vexed his righteous soule from day to day with their unlawfull deeds. Many saw and heard besides Lot, and yet were not vexed; but he vexed himselfe, that is, the meditation of those evils & bringing them home to his soule, vexed him and troubled him, and the word is a fine word, implying two things, first the search and examination of a thing, Secondly, the racking and vexing a man upon the triall. So it was with Lot, he observed all the evils, he weighed them, and pondered them; and then he racked his soule, and vexed himselfe with the consideration of them; the same word that is used here for *vexing*, is used in the matter of a storme, the text saith; *The Ship was tossed with the waves*. So meditation doth toss the soule with vexation, It was the practice of the Church, *remembering mine affliction, the wormewood and the Gall, my soule hath them in remembrance, and is humbled in me*. In remembering remembered; for so the original hath it, I remembered all my miseries and afflictions, and my finnes that were the cause thereof; that is, I still

mused

mused & meditated thereof. And what follows? the heart was buckled and bowed thereby, and was broken in the consideration thereof.

But you will say, what doe you meane by this musing and meditating? what is this meditation?

I answer, meditation is nothing else, but a settled exercise of the mind for the further inquiry of a truth, and to the affection of the heart therewith.

There are foure things to be considered in it, First, it is an exercise of the mind: it doth not barely close with a truth and apprehend it, and see it, and assent unto it, and there rest, but it lookes on every side of the truth. It is a fine phrase of Davids, *I thought upon my waies, and turned my feet into thy testimonies.* The originall carryeth it, *I looked upon my waies on both sides*, it is taken from curious workes which are the same on both sides; they that work the must ofte turn them on every side: so it was with the prophet David, *I turned my waies upside downe, and looked every way on them.* And so againe, *Many shall runne too and fro and knowledge shall be increased.* Runne too and fro, what is that? It is not the bodily removing of the man so much as the busie stirring of the mind from one truth to another; it propounds one, and gathers another, so that it sees the whole silvage of the truth. I use to compare meditation to perambulation, when men goe the bounds of the parish, they goe over every part of it, and see how farre it goes, so meditation

Question

Ans.

What meditation is.

2.

Psalm. 119. 59.

Dan. 12. 4.

The Scales preparation

On is the contemplation of the foule; when the foule lookes how far sinne goeth, and considers the punishment of it, and the plagues that are threatened against it, and the vilenesse in it.

Secondly, it is a settled exercise of the minde, it is not a sudden flash of a mans conceit upon the sudden; But it dwells and staies upon a truth, it settles againe and againe, that it hath bestowed it selfe upon; When a man is deepe in meditation upon a thing, he neither seeth nor heareth any other thing, else the fireame of the heart is settled upon the truth conceived.

A man that hath beene offered an injury by another, when he eates and walkes, still he thinkes of his injury; his heart is settled on it. So your hearts ought to be on the truth. The *Apostle to Timothy* saith, *Continue in the things thou hast learned*; the word in the originall is, Be in them; that is, let a mans mind be moulded into the truth.

Thirdly, it is a settled exercise for two ends; first, to make a further inquiry of the truth: and secondly, to make the heart affected therewith, for this is the nature of meditation, not to settle it selfe upon a thing knowne; but it would either know more in those truths that are subjected to it, or else labours to gather something from them. It is with the truth, as it is with a man which goeth into the house, and pulls the latch, when he was without, he might see the outside of the house, but he could not see the roomes within, unless he drawes the latch, and comes in, and

and goe about the house: meditation pulle the latch of the truth and sees, this is my sinne, this is the cause, here is the misery, this is the plague: and thus meditation searcheth into every corner of the truth.

Lastly, meditation labours to affect the heart, not only to know a thing, but to bring it home to the soule, *these things are so, know it for thy good*; So when a man hath viewed all and considered all, then meditation brings all to the heart, and labours to affect the heart therewith; this is that which brings sorrow and compunction for sinne, a settled exercise of the heart that meditates on sinnes, that makes inquiry after them: and the grounds are two, and very remarkeable they are.

4.
Iob. 5. last

Ground 1.

The first is this, meditation makes all a mans sinnes, and any truth belonging thereunto more powerfully and plainly to be brought home unto the heart. It is the action of the understanding when a man doth gather all reasons, and musters up force of arguments, and labours to presse the soule, and lay them heavy upon the heart, and bring it under the power of the truth. It is with meditation as it is with usurers that will grate upon men, and grinde the faces of the poore; and sucke the blood of the needy, they will exact upon men and take use upon use, they will not be contented to take the principall, but they will have consideration for all the time, until they have sucked the blood of a poore man that is under such a muckworme; A poore man could be content to pay the principall, but to exact use

upon use, this killeth him; So doth meditation, it exacts and slayeth the soule of a poore sinner, you have committed adultery in a corner, but you shall not so carry it away. This you did against the knowledge of God revealed, against many mercies received, against many Judgements threatned, against checks of conscience, against many vowes and promises remembred: and Item for this, and Item for that, and thus meditation oppresseth the soule: But then the soule will say, happily it is but a trick of youth, or it is my infirmity: No, no, saith meditation, this hath been your course from time to time continually, that hath been your haunt, it hath beene a riveted corruption that hath fastened upon your bones, and will goe to your graves with you, and it will bring you to hell. But then the soule saith, I will repent, No, no, saith meditation, your heart is hardened in this sinne, you have a heart that cannot repent nor yeeld, the word of God workes not, it prevaileth not, the minister hath sung hell fire in your face, and told you, that no drunkard, nor adulterer shall goe to heaven, and yet you goe away no more moved then the seat whereupon you sate, you have continued in sin, and are hardened in sinne. Thus marke how meditation exacts use upon use: But then the soule replies, I will goe to the word, and wait upon the meanes, and it may be the word will prevaile. No, saith meditation, you have despised the word, and God will take away his word from you, or you from his word, or his blessing from both.

both. What, is it a matter of infirmity? No, it is your continuall course. And you repent, No you cannot, you cannot, you are hardened. And you hope the word will worke upon you; No, no, it is cursed unto you. Thus meditation exacts use upon use, until the blood of the soule be sucked up. Meditation breakes the soule, and layeth waight upon the soule, in this case. It is a passage remarkable of *Peter*, the tenth faith, when our Saviour told *Peter*, that before the cock crew twice, he should deny him thrice; in the last verse of the chapter, the second time *the cocke crew*, & *Peter remembered the words of our Saviour*, & when he thought thereupon, *he went out and wept bitterly*. the word in the originall is this, the holy man catcht all together, and heaped all the circumstances together, and reasoned thus; the cocke crows, now I remember the words of Christ: oh what a wretch am I, that should deny such a master that called me; such a master as found me, such a master as was mercifull unto me? when I never saw my selfe, nor my finnes, he plucked me out from my finnes: It is that master I have denyed, he came to doe me good, & to save me, and I have denyed him: Nay, even at a dead lift, if ever I should have defended him, I should have defended him now, if ever stood for him, I should have stood for him now, but to deny my master, and forswear him, that I should do it, an Apostle beloved, an Apostle thus honored, that I should doe it, when I professed the contrary, what, such a master denied by me such an Apostle

at such a time, before such persons, and forced to it by such a silly maiden. All these sinfull circumstances, the manner of them, the nature of them, the haynousnesse of them, the holy Apostle laid all these to his heart, and his heart sunck under these circumstances thus gathered together, and *he went out and wept bitterly*. Looke as it is in war, were there many scores that came against an army, they might be conquered, or many hundreds might be resisted; but if many thousands should come against a small army, it would be in danger to be overcome. Meditation leadeth as it were an army of arguments, an army of curses, and miseries, and judgements, against the soule, how ever one misery or plague will not downe; but a man may brooke it, and goe away with it, yet meditation brings an army of arguments, and tells the soule, God is against thee where ever thou art, & what ever thou dost. And then the heart begins to cry out as *Elisha's* servant did, *Master what shall I doe?* what so many sinnes, and so haynous, and so many judgements denounced, and shall fall upon them, Lord, how shall I doe? how shall I be delivered from these, & pardoned for these: thus meditation brings home sin more powerfully to the heart.

The second argument is this: as meditation brings in all bills of account, so secondly, meditation fastens sinne upon the consciences of those to whom the word of God is spokē, more strongly, in so much that the soule cannot make escape from the truth of God delivered, and from the
judge

ments of God denounced against him : Some times when men heare the word and threatnings denounced, then their hearts are touched, and they goe away resolved not to commit sinne as they have done : But when they are gone, it workes not, but the heart recoyles againe, and goeth to his owne course againe. The reason is, because you meditate not on the word.

It is with the word as with a Slave, if a man have never so good a salve, which will helpe a soare in foure and twentie houres, if a man shall doe nothing but lay this salve to the wound, and take it off, it would never heale the wound, and no wonder : Why ? he will not let it lie on, the best salve under heaven will not heale a sore, and eate out a corruption, unlesse it be bound on, and let lie : So it is with the good word of God : many a soule heareth the word of God, and his heart is touched for his sinne, and his conscience beginnes to be awakened, but when he goeth out of the Church, all is gone, his affections die, and his heart dies, and his conscience is not touched : no wonder, you will not hold the word to your soules, you heare sinne, and not heare it : you wil see sinne, and not apprehend it ; and therefore it is, that the word over-powers not your corruptions : Do you thinke the salve will work when you keepe it not on ? The word of God is the salve, conviction of Conscience is like the binding on of the salve, meditations like the binding of it to the sore, remember the truth which touched thee first, and keep that on, let nothing

James 1.2.5.

thing take it away from thy minde, hold that good word close to the soule; and it will keepe thy heart in the very same temper, after the delivery thereof, as it was in the delivery. The Apostle *James* compares, a slight hearer to a man that lookes his face in a glasse slightly, that forgets himselfe what visage he had, but faith, Who so looketh unto the law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetfull hearer, but a doer of the word, this man shall be blessed in his deeds: the Law of liberty is the Law of God; and this Law being a glasse; You must not onely heare, and be gone, and slight and neglect it, but you must continue in looking, and then you shall see the complexion of your finnes, and the vilenesse of your corruptions: when the drunkard heareth the baseness of his finnes, and the adulterer the basenes of his abominations, they looke themselves slightly in the glasse of the Law; But they must carry away the glasse with them, and looke themselves still, & the adulterer must say, I am a prophane creature, and my heart is polluted, Conscience defiled, and this soule hardened, and I shal be damned; if a man should thus looke, and view his finnes, and carry away the glasse with him continually, he would see his life so ugly, and his heart so base, that he could not be able to beare it; If the pills be never so bitter, yet if a man swallow them suddenly, there is no great distast, but if a man chaw a pill, it wil make a man deadly sicke, because it is against the nature of it, so our finnes are like these pills, they

goe

goe downe somewhat pleasantly; because we swallow downe our oathes & prophannes, & our malice; and contempt of God and his ordinances; and we make it nothing to mocke at the religion of God, and the professors of it: you swallow downe pills now, but God will make you chew those pills one day, and then they will be bitter; Though the swearer swallowes down his oathes now, yet at last the Lord will make him remember, that he will not hold him guiltlesse, but araigne him at the day of judgement; and make him cry guilty at the barre, and againe will make you chew over your malice: you hated the Lords word, and the workes of his Spirit; and this will condemne you.

Againe, meditation doth beset the heart of a man, that he cannot escape; wheresoever he is, meditation brings those things to his minde, & the plagues due thereunto; so that he cannot escape the dint therof. It is the nature of our own hearts that we are loath to read our owne destiny, which will be our bane and confusion: meditation calls over the thoughts of a man, tells him the reasons are good, the arguments sound, the Scripture plaine, thy sinnes evident: Conscience you know it, therefore heare you must doe it, (saith meditation) take heed of drunkenesse, saith meditation, you heard what the minister said; these sinnes are against God, and the wrath of God is gone out against you for these sinnes, these will be your bane, and will bring you to everlasting destruction. And when meditation doth

doth thus yawle at the heart, the minde still musing, and the heart still pondering of sin, at last it is weary, therefore unburdened therewith, the issue of the arguments is this, if meditation brings in sin more powerful, more plainely to the soule; if it be that, which binds and fastneth it, and setteth it upon the soule; then the point is cleare, that serious meditation of sinne is a special meanes to bring a soule to the sight and sorrow for sinne.

The uses are three: the third is the maine: we will presse on unto it. If it be so, that meditation is thus powerfull and profitable, both for contrition of the heart, and to bring in consolation to the heart; then what shall we thinke of those men that are unwilling to practice this dutie? nay, what shall we thinke of that untowardnesse of heart which is in us against the command of this duty? It is a word of reproofe against this practice, and it falls marvelous heavy upon us all more or lesse in this kinde: for we are marvelous guiltie in this kinde, that we are tardy in this duty: a man had as good bring a Beare to the stake, as a carnall heart to the consideration of his owne wayes, much more loath is he to ponder seriously and meditate continually upon his sinnes; no, men are so farre from musing of their sinnes, that they disdain this practice, and scoffe at it: what say they, if all were of your minde, what should become of us? shall we alwayes be poring on our corruptions? so we may hap to runne mad, if we were of your opinion: thus we slight and put it off, and trample on this duty.

duty, which is so profitable: the poore will not meditate on his finnes, he hath no time: the rich they need it not: the wicked dare not: and so no man will in this case. What, shall a man set his soule on a continuall racke? (say they) shall a man drive himselfe to a desperate stand, and trouble himselfe unprofitably? cannot men keepe themselves when they are well? this is the course and frame of the world, and wee may complaine of this carelesse and heedlesse age, as *Jeremiah* did of his time, *Jer. 8. 6.* *No man repenteth him of his wickednesse, saying, What have I done?* there is no questioning, nor searching, no musing: no man saith, *What have I done?* no man saith, these are my finnes, these are my wayes: no man looks over his course and conversation, he doth not apprehend his sinne, and that is the reason we heare of no humbling, of no repenting: but every man runneth into sinne as the horse rusheth into the buttell, hence it is, that there are so many uncleane beasts in the Ark. In the old Law, if there were any beasts that chewed not the cud, he was counted uncleane, the chewing of the cud is serious meditation of the mercies of God to comfort us, and of our finnes, to humble us: there are many ungodly persons in the bosome of the Church, that muse not of their sinfull wayes, the Prophet *Jeremiah* saith, *Were they ashamed when they had committed iniquities? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush, he adds a reason in the eleventh verse. They could not be ashamed: why? because they cry peace, peace, yet there is no peace.* *Jer. 8. 13.*

minister

minister speake what he can, and denounce what judgement he will, they promise themselves peace, & quietnes, they consider not their wayes, and therefore their hearts are not distempered therewith, nor troubled at the consideration thereof, nay, there are many that count it an excellencie, a cunning skill, if they can drive away and shake off the sight of sinne, if they can put off the meditation of any thing the word reveales, they make it a marvelous excellent piece of skill, and what they doe themselves they would have others doe also: but they that now will not see, nor consider, nor meditate of their finnes, the truth is, they shall see them as the Lord saith by *Esay. 26. 10* *When thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see and be ashamed:* So I say, you that will not see your sins, but say, What needs all this stirre, let the minister say what hee will, shall we be mad men, to be troubled, and shall we be fooles, to be disquieted with the consideration of our finnes? well, you will not muse upon your finnes now, but the time will come, that the Lord will set all your finnes in order before you, and you shall not be able to looke off them.

And hence it is, that when a man hath lived wickedly all his dayes, and comes to lye on his death bed, then all his finnes come to his remembrance, and then conscience flies in his face, and sayes, here is a cup for a drunkard and for an adulterer: now he seeth nothing but sinne, and hell, and damnation, due to him for his sinne, and then he cries out he is damned. You might have
scene

seene something before then, if you had seene them to be humbled for them, you should never have seene them to be damned for them. If there be but any occasion of basenesse offered to the view of the drunkard, which way doth he not use to compasse his carnall delights? and shall the drunkard and prophane wretch be so eager in lingering after sinne, that he may commit it, and be damned for it, and shall not a man so labour to see his iniquities, that he may be humbled for them before God, and receive mercy from God in the pardon of the same? Shall the reprobate hate judgements on their soules, and bend all their meditations that way, and shall not they that desire to see God in glory, doe the same?

The Second use is for instruction: from the former doctrine delivered, we may collect, that loose, vaine, joviall company is the greatest hindrance to preparatiō for Christ, and the greatest obstacle to the worke of grace that can be possible: this is not forced, but followeth clearly from the former truth, in this manner: thus I reason.

That course which takes away the minde from musing, and the understanding from meditating on his evill way, that course is the greatest hindrance why the heart is not humbled, and fitted for the Lord, for meditation brings in contrition, and that prepares the heart for Christ: but your joviall company and ryoting persons, there is nothing under heaven that takes off the minde more from musing, and the understanding from waighing a mans evill throughly, there-

The Soules preparation

therefore this must needs be a marvelous impediment, and hinderance to those that indeavour to walke uprightly before God in any measure, *Amos. 6. 5.* There are rules of their revaldry set downe, they thrust and put away the day of the Lord farre from them: that is the first law they make, the first statute they enact, thinke not of sinne now, and meditate not of judgement now, but come (say they) cast care away, fling away and caltheer those melancholly imaginati-
ons: we have many failings, let us not therefore be pondering of them, and make our selves so much the more miserable, this day shall be as yesterday, and to morrow as to day, no sorrow nor judgement, no sinne now considered. And this is remarkable, and if a poore soule in that drunken distemper should be smitten by the hand of God, and should suggest these words to his drunken companions; We are all here merry and jolly, and let out our hearts in delight, but for all this, God will bring us to judgement, the eyes of God seeth our now drinking and be-
ze-ling, and the eare of God heareth our blasphemies and swearing, and for these we shall one day be plagued: why? this should spoyle all the sport and jollity, they could not be able to beare him, but they would presely fling him out of doores: this is that which baneth many a soule, therefore take notice of it, if any of you have had a sight of sin, marke if a drunkard go aside & hang the winge a little, marke what men doe, if they can but once get him into their cōpany, & make him
him

him shake off those dumps, and runne on in his former course, then this hinders him from meditating on his finnes, and from being prepared for Christ, and hence it is, that many a poore soule that hath had the fire kindled, the terrour that the Lord hath let into his soule, would have humbled his proud stomacke, & melted his stubborne heart; but partly drunkenesse on the one side, and merriness on another, tooke away all the amazement whereby the soule might have beene wrought upon, and he have received everlasting salvation: Therefore thinke of it. It was the course the Scripture observed in the lamenting Church *Zach. 12. 12.* The house of *David* apart, and their wives apart, the house of *Nathan* apart, and their wives apart: There is no casting up of account in a crowd; but if a man will cast up his account, if he will see his sins, & consider his base practices, he must go aside by himselfe, loose occasions and vaine occasions withdraw the minde, and plucke off the soule from seeing the evill, and affecting the heart with it. Therefore the Apostle *Peter* a little beyond my text, when he saw the Jewes were affected with that he had delivered, and that their hearts were touched, when they asked him what they should doe, he saith, *save your selves from this untoward generation*, God hath now touched your hearts, suffer not Satan by these wicked Instruments of his, to steale the terrour of God out of your hearts; for your drunken companions are like nothing else, but those ravenous foules spoken of by Christ, that deuoured

the seed that fell by the way side, the soule is the Devill, the seed is the word of God, now the Devill doth not plucke this out of the soule himselfe alone, but often by cursed companions: the ale-house is the bush, that harbours those ravenous beasts, and drunken companions are those: The Devill useth to pluck out this good seed out of the heart: & therefore as you love your soules, suffer not your selves to be drawne away by these cursed wretches, do not suffer them to steale the worke of Gods spirit away which he hath wrought in your hearts: this I observe to checke that cursed practice of men, who when a man is troubled, send him to play at cards, or dice, or the like, which is the greatest meanes to hinder the worke of God in their hearts.

Use.

Thirdly, seeing meditation brings marvelous comfort and profit to our soules, then what remains? if I were silent, the word it selfe would speake, and the profit of the duty would speake, and bring your hearts to addresse your soules to this: you are therefore to be exhorted, since you see what it is that God requires, that with speed, you set upon it, and that with care and conscience you labour to persevere in the performance thereof, I beseech you thinke of it, what is more usuall in the world then this, that men should make sleight and little account of their sinnes? nay, to goe hault upright under those execrable abominations wherfore they stand guilty before God. Look as it was with *Sampson* he went away with the gates of *Gaza* and made nothing of them: so there

there are many, that carrie the gates of hell upon their backs, as drunkenness & adultery, and yet they feare not, nor are affrighted thereof, nay, Gods owne servants, that desire to looke towards *Zion*. Is not this your complaint many times? I cannot finde sinne heavy, I confesse the word discovers it, and reveales it, but I cannot be troubled for it, I cannot finde my soule burthened with it: sinne is not heavy unto me, but I carrie it away easily, and make no bones of the matter, though proud, and leud, and carelessse, and untoward, yet my hart is not apprehensive of the weight of it: Let me speake unto you: Are you not therefore here hindred in the way God requires of you, because you weigh not & ponder not those evill wayes you stand guiltie of before God, but you are better content to see them and slight them, then to remember them & lay them aside: I beseech you to take notice of it. Look as it is with men in the world, if five hundred pound weight bee laid on the ground, if a man never plucke at it, he shall not feele the weight of it, your sinnes are not many hundreds, but many thousand weights, the least vaine thought you ever imagined, the least idle word that ever you uttered, are weight enough to presse your soules downe into everlasting perdition, and therefore so many sinnes, so great, and so constantly committed against so much knowledge, against so many comforts, and encouragements, against so many vowes and protestations, are much more heavy, and yet you see them not: the reason is, you

see the not, you weigh not pride, you weigh not malice, you weigh not dead heartednesse, if you would weigh them seriously, and consider of them thoroughly, you would find that they were heavier then the sand on the sea shore, but you will say, how should we come to meditate on our sinnes, that we may be comforted? for this is the onely way: But what course shall we take? that we may be burdened? here lies the skill.

Now for the opening of the point, I will discover three things: First the ground on which our meditation must be raised: Secondly, the manner how to follow it home to the heart. Thirdly, how to put life and power, to it that it may prevaile, and worke that end in our soules which we would have it.

First, concerning the former, we must consider the grounds whereupon meditation must be raised, and them I referre to these foure heads. First, labour to see the mercy, goodnesse, and patience of God, that have bene abused and despised by that unkinde dealing of ours, and that marvelous carelesnesse, those duties, God hath required of us, the height of Gods goodnesse to us lays out the height of all our iniquities committed: The greater the kindnesse and mercy of God is, the greater are our sinnes, that esteeme not of this mercy, but abuse it, and despise it, This adds to our rebellions, this makes our sinnes out of measure sinfull, because God hath bene out of measure mercifull.

There are many sinnes in one, when a man sinneth

seth against many mercies, and walkes not worthy of them, we may observe, that this is the course that God takes to breake the hearts of the Israelites, when they had neglected his wayes, and broken his commandements: what was his message, when the Lord humbled the people and brake them kindly? The Lord by the Angell thus speakes, I made you to goe out of Egypt and brought you to the land which I sware to your fathers, and I said, I would never breake my covenant with you, and ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of the land, But ye have not obeyed my voice, why have you done this worke?

Judg. 1.11.

Now the Lord presseth this his kindnesse upon them, and labours to melt their hearts in the apprehension of his goodnesse to them, and their unthankfulness to him, in the eight verse, the text saith. When they heard this, the people lift up their voice, and wept. The consideration of Gods kindnesse to them, and their unkindnes to God.

He did all for them, and they did all against him, the Lord was gracious to them, for their comfort, but they did not walke worthy of it: Why have you done this saith the Lord? Why was my mercy despised? Why was my goodnesse slighted? Why was my patience and long suffering abused? When they heard this, they wept in the consideration of their unnaturall dealing: Nay, this is the thing remarkeable in *Christ*, he stabs the heart, and workes effectual-

Deus. 32. 64

ly upon the Israelites by this meanes? *Doe you thus requite the Lord O foolish people, and unwise? Is not he thy father that hath bought thee? Hath not he made thee, and established thee? and will you thus reward the Lord? Thus carelessly, and thus proud, and disobedient? Why, Remember, saith he, the dayes of old, and then he reckons upon Gods gracious dealing with them.*

I applie this in particular: there is never a soule here present, there is never a man in the basest estate, and lowest condition, but hath had experience of Gods goodnesse, and mavelous loving kindnesse this way. Were you ever in want, but God supplied you? were you ever in weakenesse, but God strengthened you? in sicknesse, who cured you? in misery, who succoured you? in povertie who relieved you? hath not God been a gracious God unto you? every poore soule can say, never a poore sinner hath had a more gracious God then my soule, all my bones can say, Lord who is like unto thee? this heart hath been heavy and thou hast cheared it, this soule hath beene heavy and thou hast relieved it, many troubles have befallen me and thou hast given a gracious issue out of them all.

And shall I thus reward the Lord? shall I sin against his goodnesse and this kindnesse? Then what shall I say, heare O heaven, and harken O earth, the Oxe knoweth his owner, and the Ass his masters crib, and Israel knoweth not Gods kindnesse, nor acknowledgeth his goodnesse towards them, the consideration hereof one would thinke

thinke should break the hardest heart under heaven: if men be but ingenious men, if they have received any great kindnes from a friend, they were never in want but he relieved them, he tooke them into his house, and they might freely goe to his purse or any thing he had. If a man should deale thus kindly with another, and this man should deny him an ordinary favour, he will be ashamed to come into his presence, he will say his house was mine, and his purse was mine, and to deale thus unkindly, nature would have taught me otherwise: what are your hearts to God that hath been gracious to us all, he hath created us, & doth preserve and keepe and afford many blessings unto us, he gives us our houses that cover us: it is God that affords us all this, and shall we sinne against such mercy? therefore goe to the beasts of the field, and they will tell you, and to the birds of the ayre, and they will discover unto you Gods mercy: goe to your beds and tables; who gives these, and continues these? doth not the Lord? & yet sinne against this God? O foolish people and unwise, all love on Gods part, and all negligence on ours? God exceeds in goodnesse towards us, & we doe exceed in unkindnesse, and unthankfulnes towards him; this is the first ground upon which re litation must be raised.

The second ground, secondly if it be so that mercy will not prevaile with you, if you have no good nature in you, then secondly, consider that this is a just God, that hath beene provoked by your sinnes, if mercy cannot prevaile with you,

you shall have Iustice enough, and that without mercy; you must not thinke to slight Gods mercy, and carry it away in that fashio. But God is a Iust God, as he is a gracious God; he will be revenged of you; If there be any stubborne heart shall say, God is mercifull, and what then? therefore we may live as we list, and be as carelesse as we please: Take heed, that Iust law that hath been condemned, and those righteous statutes that hath beene broken, and God hath beene provoked by you, will be revenged of you; did ever any provoke the Lord and prosper, and shall you beginne? first thinke you where is *Nyrod* and *Nebuchadnezer*, and *Pharoah*, and *Heracl*, and those proud persons that set their mouths against God and their hearts against heaven, they that provoked the Lord, what is now become of them? they are now in the lowermost pit of hell,

God sent *Pharoah* into the red sea, and for ought we know, his soule may now be roaring in hell; this is certaine, that whosoever resisteth him shall find him a swift Judge to condemne him. The *Apostle* saith, *Hebr. 12.* and last, our God is a consuming fire. and in *Dent. 22.* and 32. *If my fire be kindled, it shall burne to the bottome of hell.* That Iustice of God will not be appeased without satisfaction; that Justice is wise, and cannot be deceived, that Justice is powrefull, and cannot be resisted, and not only justice, but mercy & patience will come in, and plead for vengeance against the sinner, and that will be the sorest plague of all. When you appeare before God what wil you expect?

peſt you will call for mercy to ſave you, and for patience to beare with you. No, no, ſaith Mercy, Juſtice Lord; I have beene deſpiſed. Juſtice ſaith, Patience hath beene abuſed. Juſtice, ſaith Goodneſſe, I have beene wronged. And how will it be then, when Mercy it ſelfe ſhall condēne that ſoule, and Patience ſhall be an accuſer of it, and Goodneſſe ſhall call for vengeance againſt it.

The third ground : Thirdly, as we muſt conſider Gods mercy that hath beene abuſed, and the Juſtice of God that hath beene provoked : So conſider the nature of your finnes, and the haynouſneſſe of them : ſinne is not a trick of youth or a matter of merriment; but a breach of the Law of God, and therefore it is good for a man in this caſe to examine every commandement of God, and the breach thereof : Thus I would have the ſoule well acquainted with the Law : You know not your finnes, therefore get you home to the Law, and looke into the glaſſe thereof, and then bundle up all your finnes thus. So many fins againſt God himſelf, in the firſt commandement, againſt his worſhip, in the ſecond, againſt his name, in the third, againſt his Sabbath in the fourth commandement; nay, all our thoughts, words, and actions, all of them have beene finnes able to ſinke our ſoules to the bottome of hell : bundle up your finnes, & lay one upon the heart and another upon the conſcience, and then it will breake your backes, thoſe ſmall infirmities you make nothing of, & thoſe finnes you make ſlight of, and make a trick of youth, if you will be-
flow

showing your minds a little seriously; you will see them to be farre otherwise: every sinne deserves death, *The wages of sinne is death*, not he onely that murders his neighbour, and takes away his life, but the malicious man, and the proud man deserves death. Nay, to come nearer the text, what if I prove you had a hand in the shedding of the blood of Christ, dwell here a little and consider it, and you shall see the point cleare. If there be any soule here present that hopes to have any part in Christ, as if I should goe from man to man and aske, have you a part in Christ? you will say, aye surely I hope so; marke what I say the, if thou hopest for any mercy from Christ, then Christ was thy surety and bare thy sinnes, and those sinnes of thine were the witnesses against our Saviour, they were the souldiers that rooke him, the thornes that pierced him, the speare that gored him, the Crosse that tooke away his life: The truth is, the souldiers, and *Pilate*, & the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, could have done nothing to our Saviour but for thy sinnes: had it not beene for thy sinnes, had it not beene for the sinnes of the elect, the souldiers could not have apprehended him, the *Pharisees* could not have witnessed against him, there could have been no Judge to condemne him; very well then, thy sins caused all this; thy wicked thoughts and wicked actions caused our Saviour to cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* He sunke under the consideration of thy sinnes, and thou goest away and makest a tricke of youth of them,

and

and a matter of merrymēt, of loose talke, and wicked doings; well, you had a part in the crucifying of Christ. When you are gone, think of this, and as you are going home, thinke with your selves, It was my sinnes that had a part in the shedding of the blood of Christ, and when you are at meate let that come into your mind, I have had a hand in the crucifying of the Lord Jesus Christ, and when you go to bed thinke of it, I am one of those that have embrewed their hands in the blood of the Lord Jesus, that Saviour that is now at the right hand of God, that hath done so much for his servants, that sweat drops of blood, those sweates and drops were for thy sinnes, and is this a matter of merrymēt and a trick of youth in the meane times? No, no, thy soule will finde it otherwise one day, unless the Lord remove those sinnes of thine, those sins will make thee howle in hell fire one day, unless you be burthened with them here: thinke of this, I am one of those that by vaine thoughts and prophane actions have crucified the Lord of life, and if you can make those sinnes a matter of merriment I wonder at it.

The fourth Ground ariseth from the consideration of the punishment of sinne, you must consider what sinne will cost you; namely, those endlesse torments that cannot be conceived nor prevented, and I will leave here to speake of the paines of the wicked, (I should have said much thereof) and come to speake only a little of the last Judgement. Me thinkes I see the Lord of
heaven

The Soules preparation

heaven and earth, and the attributes of God appearing before him: the Mercy of God, the Goodnesse of God, the Wisedome of God, the Power of God, the Patience and long suffering of God; and they come all to a sinner, a wicked hypocrite, or a carnall professor, and say, Bounty hath kept you, Patience hath borne with you, Long suffering hath endured you, Mercy hath relieved you, the Goodnesse of the Lord hath beene great unto you, All these comfortable attributes will bid you adue, and say, farewell damned soule, you must goe hence to hell, to have fellowship with damned ghosts, Mercy shall never be enlarged towards you any more, you shall never have Patience any more to beare with you, never Goodnesse more to succour you, never compassion more to relieve you, never power more to strengthen you. Nay, you that have heretofore withdrawn your selves from Gods wisedome and gossell, you shall never have wisedome more to guide you, never Gossell more to comfort you, never Mercy more to cheare you, you shall then goe into endlesse and ealelesse torments, which can never be ended, where you shall never be refreshed, never eased, never comforted; and then you shall remember your finnes. My covetousnesse and pride was the cause of this, I may thanke my finnes for this. Thinke of these things (I beseech you,) seriously, and see, if sinne be good now, see, if you can take any sweetnesse in it: I end all with that of Job;
that my griefe were well weighed, and my calamity

laid

laid in the ballance: for now they would be heavier then the sand of the sea. So say I, oh that our sins were weighed, and our iniquities weighed in the ballance together, such mercy have we despised, such Justice we have provoked, such a Lord of life have we crucified, such torments have we deserved, endlesse, easelesse, and remediesse: if these were weighed, they would be heavier then the sand, and smicke our soules under the consideration of them.

But then you will say, happily I can thinke of these things, and consider of them. The mind happily hath conceived and sadowed these truths and brought in these occasions, and yet for all this, the mind stirres not, the heart workes not, I say therefore, when your meditation is thus raised, you must have this skill to follow home the blow, and make it worke kindly on the heart, and that is done by these three things. When your meditation is up, there is another thing which is the following of it home to the soule, and that appeareth in these three particulars.

The first is this, when we have conceived a right of sinne, and the nature thereof, and the punishment due thereunto, then doe not rest in the bare consideration of these things, but never leave the heart, be still musing of these things, and bring these blessed truths home to the soule, & binde these things on the wil and affections, hold them and fasten them there, force them upon the soule, that the heart may not make an escape: take notice of it, it is a rule I would have you consider

der of, never leave meditating til you finde your heart so affected with the evill, as your mind & judgement conceived of the evill before; namely, let the heart feele that evill it conceived, let the soule feel that gall to be in sin which the mind apprehended to be in it: you see these sinnes loathsome and abominable, make the heart feel them, and be affected with them; the heart will fly off now, therefore it is the cunning of a Christian to lay at the heart, and pursue it continually, and hold these truthees to the soule, and at last it may be under the dint of the blow, and the power of God makes the soule feele and finde, and be apprehensive of the gall, and bitterness, and vilenes of the evill, as before it conceived it so to be. It is not enough for a man to exercise himselfe in the meditation of sin, but a mā must bring his soule in subjection under the power of that meditation, a man must not only chew his meat, but he must swallow it also, if he meane to have it nourish him: meditation is when the heart swalloweth downe these sinnes, that is, when he labours so to be affected with sinne, and the nature of it, as it doth require. Meditation in this case is like the beleaguering of a Citie, when a Citie is wisely & strongly beleagured, and beset round about, they doe two things: first, they batter it from without as much as they can; and secondly, they cut off all provision and reliefe from comming in, and so the city being partly battered from without, as much as they can, and being hindred from all reliefe comming in, in conclusion when they see

See the enemy is strong, and no provision can come to them, they are content to yeeld the City, and render up themselves, and if they send a party to him that doth besiege it, and say, they are ready to perish, why, he bids them deliver then, and they shall be provided for, he bids them yeeld, and they shall be succoured, and before that day, there is no supply shall be brought into the City. So it is with meditation, and here is the cunning of a Christian. Do as wise Souldiers doe, cut off all provision, that is, by serious meditation bring thy heart to such a loathing of sinne, that it may never love it more, besiege the heart with daily meditation, that so you may cut off any ease and refreshing that the heart may seeme to have in any sinfull course, if the soule be looking after any sinne, if the soule would goe out a litle to occasions, and take delight in his corruptions, the drunkard in his company, and the wordly man in his wealth, then batter that: When you are thus affected, beleaguer the way, that you may finde no comfort, no ease, and when the soule is looking after occasions, and lingering after his abominations, then say to your hearts, you will have your sins though you have your shame with them, you will have your corruptions, though you have your confusion with them: when the soule would meddle with these, let meditation knocke off these. If you be still proud, and malicious, and quarrelling, take heed, you cannot have these, but you must have hell and all, you cannot have these, but you must have destruction

destruction and all: the mercy of God will be not abused; and the justice of God will not be provoked, and God will be revenged of you, and at last the heart by this meanes will be troubled: Why, deliver up your sins then, and your soules, if your hearts find any sorrow and anguish; why, then yeeld up your souls unto Christ, that you may finde as much comfort in a good way, as you have done misery in an evill way. Thus by meditation make the heart see those evils; nay, thus by meditation make thy heart see those evils, and the punishment that shall be executed for those evils.

Secondly, when you have made the heart thus affected with sinne, then take heed that the heart doth not flie off and shake off the yoke. Imagine meditation brings all those sins, and miseries, and vilenesse, all are brought home to the heart, and the soule is made sensible by this meanes: Hold the heart there then, labour to keepe the heart in the same temper, that it is brought into, by the consideration of sinne, for this is our nature, when the strooke is troublesome that lieth upon us, and the finnes are hainous that lie upon us, and are committed by us, these finnes, these sorrowes, these judgements, when the heart feels this, it is weary, and would secretly have the wound healed quickly, and the sorrow removed, and the trouble calmed: Take heede of this, and labour to maintaine that heat of heart, which you finde in your selves by verue of meditation, this is the pitch of the point: as there must bee
subjection

subjection unto meditation, the heart must be so
 affected with sinne, as it conceived it to be, so
 there must be attention; that is, the soule must
 hold it selfe to that frame and disposition so
 wrought as it should be. Looke as it is with a
 Gold smith that melteth the metall that he is to
 make a vessell of, if after the melting thereof,
 there follow a cooling, it had bene as good it
 had never bene melted, it is as hard, haply
 harder, as unfit, haply unfitter, then it was be-
 fore to make vessell of; but after he hath melted
 it, he must keep it in that frame till he come to the
 moulding and fashoning of it: So meditation is
 like fire, the heart is like a vessell, the heart is
 made for God, and it may be made a vessell of
 grace here, and of glory hereafter. Now medita-
 tion, it is that melts the soule, the crosse must be
 taken away from the soule, and sinne must bee
 loosened from the heart: Now meditation doth
 this, it melts the soule, and affects the soule with
 the weight of sinne: now when you have your
 heart in some measure melted, keepe it there,
 doe not let it grow loose againe, and carelesse a-
 gaine; for then you had as good never have bene
 melted: And that is the reason why many a poore
 sinner that hath sometime bene in a good way,
 and the Lord hath come kindly and wrought
 powerfully on the heart, and yet at last it hath
 grown cold & dumpish, & as hard as ever he was
 againe, and the worke is to beginne againe. And
 take notice of it; looke as it is with the cure of
 the body, if a man have an old wound, and a
 deepe

deepe one, two things are observable; it is not enough to launce the wound, and draw out the corruptions, but it must be tented also, for if the wound be deepe, it must not be healed presently, but it must be kept open with a tent, that it may be healed soundly, and thoroughly: so it is here; meditatio whē it is set on, doth launce the soule, it launceth the heart of a man, and it will goe downe to the bottome of the belly: VVhen a man seeth his sinne, and weigheth his sinne it will goe downe to the bottom sometime, and when your heart is thus affected, do not heale it too soone, but hold the soule in that blessed frame & disposition: For as meditatio doth launce the soule, so attention doth tent the soule; keepe the soule therefore so troublesome and sorrowfull that so you may be healed soundly, thorowly, and comfortably.

I use to finde this by experience, a City that is beleaguerd and wonne, he that hath won it, sets a Garison over it, that he may keepe it for ever under: So when the soule hath beene wonne by the stroke of meditation affecting the heart with sinne, then set a garison over the soule, and keepe it in awe, set a garison over the Conscience and keepe all downe, keepe all under, that it may submit it selfe, and that kindly under the stroke of the truth, for it were a blessed frame, if we could alwayes be so in that temper that we are in when we are first humbled for our sinnes.

The third rule, which is marvelous usefull is this: when the soule hath beene affected with
sinne

sinne by meditation, and kept to sinne by attention, then know how you must stint your soules; know therefore that the soule must be so farre kept to the consideration of sinne, that it may seeke out for pardon for sinne. This is a point of marvelous use, and you must give me leave to be enlarged; because there are many deceits this way, in the spirits of a man: for marke it, this is the cunning of the Devill, if it be possible, he will keepe a man that he shall never see, muse, nor be troubled for sinne; and therefore he doth plucke him off, and sends him to company on one side, and merriment on the other side, that by this meanes, he may keepe him from serious meditation of the evill: But if it be so that God wil make a man meditate of his sinnes, and that the heart of a sinner is fully resolved to muse, and ponder, and consider of his corruptions; If he will pore upon his sinnes, then he shall see nothing else but sinne: and thus the Devill hath hindred many a poore soule from coming unto Christ, and fro receiving comfort of him; he shall now be alwayes poring upon his corruptions, and therefore here lies the skill of a Christian, not to neglect meditation, and therefore here is the stint of meditation of our sinnes, you shall thus discover it: So farre see thy sinnes, so farre be affected with them, so farre hold thy minde to them, that they may make thee see an absolute necessity of a Christ, and that these sinnes may drive thee to the Lord Iesus Christ for succour: here is the maine thing observable, and thus farre we may

goe, and must goe, if ever God intend to doe good to our soules: and therefore when thou fettest thy soule, and bestowest thy selfe to muse and meditate upon thy corruptions, and lay them to thy heart; when thou findest thy soule to bee affected with them, and humbled under them, labour then to see an absolute necessity of a Lord Iesus Christ; and so farre see them, that they may drive thee, & compell thee to seeke unto Christ for mercy: and this is all God lookes for, all the Lord requires and cares for in this preparation or preparative worke: And therefore take notice of it, see thy sinnes so farre as they may make thee meerey looke for a Christ, and to fall upon the armes of Gods mercy in and through Christ. For it is not sorrow for sinne, nor humiliation, nor faith in selfe, that can iustifie us in it selfe, but onely these must make way for us to a Christ; and through him we must receive comfort: for these two be the speciall extreames, that the Devill seekes to drive a man into: If a man presume of a mans owne sufficiency, then he thinkes he is well, and he will not goe to Christ, because he thinkes, he doth not stand in need of Christ; and if he despaire of his owne abilitie, he will not goe to Christ neither, and here is the ground why a sinner despaires, it is not by reason of any sinne, excepting onely the sinne against the holy Ghost, despaire is not grounded there, for Cain despaiied, yet *Manasse* committed greater sinnes then *Cain* and despaiied not, but the soule despaiies out of stoutnelle of heart, because

because it hath not sufficiencie in it selfe, it will not looke out for helpe and comfort from another: presumption saith, I have sufficiencie in my selfe, and need not goe unto Christ; and despaire saith, I have not sufficiencie, and therefore will not goe to Christ: here is the property of despaire, to cast away hope, when a man hath no hope that God will helpe him, now all the while the soule lookes for sufficiencie from Christ, there is hope; for though our finnes bee never so hainous, thats nothing, all the question is, whether we can hope in Christ: For if all the finnes that ever were, are, or shall be committed, ranne into one man, as all Rivers runne into one Sea, Christ could as easily pardon his finnes, as ever he pardoned the finnes of any Saints in heaven: but here is the ground, when we looke into our selves, we can see there is no sufficiencie to comfort us, and we will not goe to Christ, that we may be comforted; and so we come to be voide of hope, and to despaire: a despairing heart, is a proud stubborne heart, because he cannot have what he would of his owne, therefore he will not goe to another to receive it, and so sinkes downe in his finnes. And therefore let this be the period and stint of meditation, when the soule so farre seeth sinne and the punishment deserved by it, that the hart is resolved that none but Christ can take away these finnes and the punishments due to them, and is resolved to seeke to Christ, and be beholden to him for all, when it is thus with you, then away to the Lord Jesus

Christ, and let this meditation of a mans corruptions be as a Bridge to carry him to Christ, that so he may have salvation which is promised through him, and shall be bestowed upon all broken hearted sinners: and marke what I say, that soule that will not seeke out to Christ, and will not be beholding to Christ for what he needs, that soule wants brokennesse of heart: What ever he be that will not seeke out to Christ, and goe out of himselfe to another, wants brokennesse, and this stubbornnesse of his, that he will not goe to Christ, ariseth from some of these three grounds.

First, the soule will not goe out, it is because the heart thinkes and presumes it hath no neede of Christ, and therefore will not goe, but we will not medle with that: for that is proper to carnall men.

Secondly, if the soule will not seeke out to Christ for helpe and comfort, it is because the heart is not content in good earnest to be ruled by Christ, that Christ should come and take possession of the soule, and doe all, therefore if the heart cling to corruption, it is content that Christ should ease it, but not that Christ should sanctifie it, and remove that corruption that hath prevailed over it, and therefore when a man is under the sight of sinne, he would faine have God shew mercy unto him, and yet he will not pray, nor read, nor use the meanes but dwels upon the meditation of his sinnes, and neglects many ordinances of God, whereby it may re-

ceive comfort: this man would have a Christ to quiet him, but not to rule him, and take possession of him. and this is the reason why, in these cases the soule is never commonly kindly stricken, these would faine have quiet and comfort, and yet they will not be driven to holy duties, nor be content that Christ should rule in them, they are content to commit the sinne, but they would have pardon for it.

The third ground is this, and the cunningest of all, and that is this; provided the soule be content to be ruled by the Lord Jesus, and to submit unto him, yet here is another deceit of the soule of a poore sinner, that would joyne something with Christ, for the helping of him in that great worke of salvation, and this I take to be the complaint of sinners, and sometime broken hearted ones too; they dare not goe to expect mercy from the Lord Jesus. Why? why? because they are unworthy, so abominable their lives, so wretched their courses, that they dare not goe to Christ, that he may shew mercy to them. The reason the point thus, is it because of your unworthinesse that you dare not goe to Christ? so then, if you had worthinesse, this would encourage you for to goe: Why then, you thinke Christ is not able alone to helpe you, but you would have your worthinesse helpe Christ to save you, and so you would joyne with the Lord Jesus in this great price of Salvation and Redemption: If your sinnes were but small, and you had some worthinesse, that so Christ might

doe something, and your worthinesse doe something, and so you might make up the price betweene you, then you could be content to goe to Christ, but otherwise you thinke you may not goe to Christ, without some worthinesse of your owne; Againe, why then (belike) you will be beholden to Christ for so much mercy, and so much grace, and so much forgivenesse: one of these two must needs be the ground of this complaint, either we would have our own worthines joyned something with Christ, or else we are so vile that we will not be beholden to Christ for so much mercy; but this unworthinesse indeed is nothing else but pride, a man will not be beholden to Christ for so much mercy, but he will share with Christ in the matter of salvation, or else he will not be partaker of the great worke of redemption.

Imagine a debtor were in prison, and a friend sends to him, what ever the debt be, if he will but come to him, he will pay all; the man returns this answer, If he had not such a great debt to pay, he would be content to come to him, but the truth is, the debt is so great that he will not come to him, nor trouble him: now one of these two must needs follow, either he thinks his friend is not able, or willing to pay his debt, or else in truth he will not be beholden to him for so much, but if the debt were a little one, then he would make a shift to pay some, and his friend some, and so they would make up the debt between them: So it is in this case, this is that which keeps

keeps the heart from laying hold on the promise: they thinke they are unworthy to pertake thereof, which is nothing but pride of spirit: for either they would bring something, and share with Christ in the worke of redemption, or else they will not be beholden to Christ for so much mercy.

There is another shift which keeps the heart from going to Christ, O saith one, I never had my heart so broken & affected as such a one hath; and therefore they dare not goe to Christ, because they have not so much contrition, their hearts so much broken as others have, therefore they dare not goe: Ay, but be your soules content to goe to Christ and yeeld to him; would you keepe any corruption? is there any sinne which you would not have Christ come and remove? The soule answereth, that they would be content to resigne all to the Lord Jesus Christ, but they are not so humbled as others are: I say the ground of this complaint is nothing else but selfe-confidence in broken heartednesse, for the soule is not content to have so much broken heartednesse as is sufficient to bring a man to Christ, but it would have so much as that it might bring a man to Christ to helpe him in the worke of redemption; they thinke it is not enough to have the soule so humbled as to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ, but they would have so much as they would joyn with Christ in this great worke: which is nothing else, but carnall confidence. Therefore the conclusion is this: So farre see thy sinnes, so farre medi-

meditate upon thy finnes, and so farre labour to have thy heart affected with thy finnes, and so far attend unto them, that three things may follow.

First, that you may see an absolute necessity of Christ, and that thou maist use all meanes to seeke unto him, and never be quiet whilst thou findest him; Nay, while thou dost use the meanes but only upon the Lord Jesus; pray, and rest not in prayer, but in a Saviour that is obtained by prayer; heare, but rest not in hearing, but convey to thy selfe what is revealed in hearing; receive the Sacraments, but rest not in them, but therein seeke a Saviour which is there signed: this is the very stint and pitch of meditation: thus farre see and affect and drawe your hearts to the consideration of your finnes, that the soule may be forced to goe to Christ, and use all meanes to find him, pray for a Christ, heare for a Christ, use all meanes, and see a need of a Christ, to blesse thee in all thy services, and see a need of a Christ to pardon thy finnes, and then you take a right course; And thus much for the second passage; now we see how to follow meditation home, that the soule may be affected therewith, and holden thereto.

Ay, but you will say, our thoughts are dull, and our meditation fraile, and our wants heavy, and little good we get by this meditation, we fall to sinne againe; how shall we come to get the life of meditation, that it may be to us as it ought to be?

I answer, the meanes to make meditation power-

powerfull are two, I confesse after a man hath mused and pondered, it is possible that a corrupt heart may recoil and fall backe againe, therefore there are two helpes to put more life into meditation.

First, labour to call in the helpe and assistance of conscience, that meditation may be more fruitfull and powerfull; conscience is a great commander, it is Gods vicegerent and chiefe officer, and God is the general overseer of all the affaires of the world, but conscience hath authority to execute Judgement according to the sentence God hath revealed, and hath a greater command with the heart, then bare meditation hath, understanding and reason are but the underlings of the wil, & they are but servants & subjects to the wil, and these only suggest and advise unto the will what is good, as a servant may suggest to his master what is good, and yet his master may take what he list, & refuse what he please in this kind. But conscience hath a greater command, *Rom. 2. 15.* conscience is said to accuse or excuse a man, and conscience comes with a law and a command as the *Apostle* saith, *1. John 3. 20.* *If our hearts condemn us;* conscience makes the heart to yeeld. I compare it thus: look as it is happily with a man that is in debt, if a man have a writ out for him, he is not troubled greatly with that, he will not goe to prison because of that, nay, though he shew it him, yet he will not goe, but if he brings the Sergeant to arrest him, then he must go, and then he must be imprisoned whether he will

or

ornor: So it is here, meditation brings in the writ, and sheweth a man his finnes, layeth open all his duties neglected, so many hundred duties omitted, so many thousand finnes committed, so many prophanations of Sabbaths, so many oathes, so many blasphemies; but the soule saith, What is this to me? I have sinned, and others have sinned, and I shall doe as well as others; but conscience is a Sergeant, and Sergeants do your office, these are your finnes; and as you will answer it at the day of Judgement, take heed of those sins upon paine of everlasting ruine. When conscience begins thus to arrest a man, then the heart comes and gives way to the truth revealed; and conscience thus settles it upon the heart.

The Second meanes whereby meditation may get power upon the soule, is this, we must cry & crave, and call for the spirit of humiliation and contrition, that God by that blessed spirit of his which in Scripture is called the spirit of bondage would set to his helping hand & assist conscience his officer, & take the matter into his owne hand, and because there are many rebellious corruptions that oppose Gods truth, we must call to heaven for helpe, that God would seise upon the heart, and breake it: A perverse heart will blinde the Judgement, and say, I will have my finnes, though I be damned for them, and when conscience comes, and saith, I will beare witness against you for your pride, and covetousnesse, and prophanesse. They resist conscience. Look as it is if a Sergeant arrest a man, he may escape his hands,

or kill the Sergeant, but if the Sheriffe or the King himself come, & take the prisoner in hand, then he must goe to prison whether he will or no; so it is here, though a corrupt heart can stoppe conscience, stay conscience, yet there is a commanding power of Gods spirit, the spirit of humiliation: And when God comes from heaven to aide his officer, the heart must stoope, and be governed. Look as it is with a child that is under government, his father perhaps bids the servant correct him, now it is admirable to see how the child will taunt with the servant, and struggle with him mightily, now when the father heareth this, he saith, Give me the rod, and he tells the child, you would not be whipped, but I will scourge you; and he will set it home, and plague him so much the more, because he resisted the servant: So it is here, the Lord hath revealed his will and sent his ministers to discover your sins, and terrifie your hearts; it is strange to see what resistance we make, one scornes to heare, and rebels against the minister. Well, however the voice of the minister, or the word, cannot make the blow fall heavy enough for the time, yet if the Lord take the rod into his owne hand, he will make the stoutest stomach stoope, and the hardest heart come in: when the father takes the rod into his hand, and sets in hell fire, he will set it home, take it off who will or can, the apostle saith it is the spirit of bondage, and observe the place, *When the spirit of bondage remaineth then cometh feare*: The spirit of bondage is said

Rom. 8. 15.

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Rom. 8. 15.

Iob, 36. 6. 10.

to be the spirit of feare, as who should say, the Lord sheweth a man his bondage by the Almighty power of his Spirit, and will make the soule feeble it and stoope unto it. In Iob the Lord doth shew unto men their workes, and then he commands them to returne, he openeth their eare to discipline (saith the text) and commandeth that they returne from iniquity, he openeth the eye, and maketh a man see his sinnes, and then he commands the heart to returne whether it will or no. When the Lord doth shew unto man his sinnes, and holds him to his sinnes, that he cannot looke off them, this is the worke of the spirit of bondage: when conscience hath done his duty, and yet his mouth is stopped, then the Lord himselfe comes, and however the word by the mouth of the ministry could not prevaile, yet God will set the sun-light of his spirit to your soules, and then you shall see your sinnes, and stoope under them. When a man would cut off the sense of sinne, yet where ever he is, and what ever he doth, the Lord presents his sins to him, when he goeth in the way, he reades his sinnes in the pathes, when he is at meate his sinnes are before him, when he goeth to lie downe, he goeth to read his sinnes on the tester of his bed, this is thy covetousnesse, and thy pride, and for these thou shalt be plagued. Look upon these sinnes, they are thine owne, & thou hast deserved punishments to be inflicted upon thee for them: thus we see the grounds how meditation must be raised: We see how we may bring meditation home to the heart, we see how also

also we may get the life & power of meditation.

I thought to have propounded an example that you may see the practice of the truth delivered: as imagine it were the sinne of the opposing of the word, I would breake my soule withall; first, by meditation cast the compasse of this sin, looke into the word, & see whatsoever the word hath revealed of this sinne: The text saith, by this meanes the anger of the Lord is marvelously provoked, in so much that *he will laugh at the destruction of such*. Nay, by this meanes Christ himselfe is despised, nay, our condemnation is hereby sealed irrecoverably. 1.Chron.36. 16. the text saith, *They despised Gods word, till the wrath of the Lord arose, and there was no remedy*: Nay, hereby we aggravate our condénation. For Christ saith, Mat.11.22. *Woe be to thee Bethsayda: Woe be to thee Chorazin, for if the mightie workes which have beene done in thee, had beene done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented in dust and ashes: But it shall be easier for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgement, then for thee*: Nay, the Author to the Hebrewes saith, 2.3. *How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?* The case of such a man is desperate: how shall we escape? Thus you see the reach how farre this sinne goeth, gather up all then, and tell your hearts of this, when they rebell and oppose the word of God; How dare I doe this? what, provoke God so farre as to laugh at my destruction? what, despise Christ and his Spirit, nay, make my case irrecoverable, and aggravate to my condemnation? but if the heart

Prov.1.26.

heart will not stoope under this, then call for conscience; conscience to your charge, and then conscience comes, and chargeth the soule on paine of everlasting condemnation to heare and to be humbled; And if this will not doe, intreat the Lord to take the rod into his owne hand, and bring these truths home unto the soule, that it may never be quieted till it be humbled: this is the course I would have you take, to bring the truth home to your soules. When the minister hath done his sermon, then your worke beginnes, you must heare all the weeke long: he that never meditates of his finnes, is never like to be broken hearted for his finnes: take notice of this, The text saith of these converts, *They were pricked in their hearts.*

This clause of the verse discovers unto us that, which brings in this shiverednesse and contrition of spirit which the Lord calls for at the hands of his servants, Now give me leave to make way for my selfe, by opening of the words, that having taken away all the vaile from them, you may more clearly see the truth delivered.

First, let me shew you what this *piercing or pricking* of the heart is.

Secondly, what is meant by *heart*. You must know, that sound sorrow, or sorrow soundly fet on, is here meant by *pricking*, and this word *pricking* resembles sorrow in three degrees: For the word in the originall imports not only a bare *pricking*, but a *searching quite through*, and we have no word in our English tongue to answer the same

same word, but onely a shiverednesse of soule all to pieces. I say there are three things where in *pricking* resembles sorrow. First, the body cannot be pricked, but there must be some paine, some griefe, some trouble wrought by it, and accompanying of it. Secondly, it is the separation of one part from another, as the naturall Philosophers couceive, and as the Physitian gives us to understand, it is the sundering of two parts. Thirdly, the parts being thus pricked, there is the letting of it out, and if any blood or water be in that part thus pricked, so answerably in this sound sorrow in heart, there are three things; I meane in that sorrow which is set home by the Almighty: First, there is a great griefe and vexation of soule: Secondly, by reason of the burthen that lieth upon the heart, that cursed knot, and union, and combination betweene sinne and the soule comes in some measure to be severed and parted; the soule being thus grieved with the sinne, is content to be severed from it: this is the thing we aime at. Thirdly, this knot of corruption being loosened, and this closure being broken, and the souldring betweene sinne and the soule being removed, there is now a passage for the letting out of all these corruptions, that the heart may be taken from under the power of sinne and be subject to the power and guidance of God: This is the true nature of sorrow. And by the way, consider this, unlesse the Lord should thus wound and vexe the soule, the heart that prizeth corruption as a God (as every naturall

naturall man doth) would never be severed from it; did the soule see onely the delight in sinne, it would never part from it; and therefore God is forced to make us feele this, that we may be severed from our sinnes; and be subject to him in all obedience.

Secondly, what is meant by heart; not to tyre you with any matter of signification, this word implieth two things specially, which concerns our purpose, both may be implied and intended, but the first is mainly implied and intended, it is not the naturall part of a man which is in the middle of the body, that is, a fleshy heart, but it is the will it selfe, and that abilitie of soule, where by the heart saith, I will have this, and I will not have that. As the understanding is seated in the head, and keeps his sentinell there, so the will is seated in the heart, when it comes to taking or refusing, this is the office of the will, and it discovers his act there. As our Saviour saith; *Where your treasure is, there will your hearts be also.* And (as the Apostle saith) *a man cannesse with his mouth and beleeveth with his heart.* So then they were not onely pricked as with a pinne, but this sorrow seifeth upon the soule, and pierceth unto the very will, it was not outward overly sorrow, but that which went to the very root, and entred into the very heart.

Mat. 6. 21.

Doctrine

From these words thus opened, the Doctrine I might have handled from this point is, that sins unpardoned are of a piercing nature, they were not onely pricked, because they heard the words,

Mat. 13. 12.

21

but

but their sins peirced them: but I will not meddle with this point, though otherwise is were very usefull.

The use is, this might take off the Imagination of those that thinke there is no delight, but in sinfull courses, they are much deceived: There is no gall but in sinne, and there is no sorrow but from sinne, and sinne onely imputed made our Saviour to buckle under it, *Psalm 12. Davids heart was crushed with it, Psalm. 40.* Nay, the Apostle saith, *All the creatures groaned under it,* the earth groanes under sinners, and is willing to vomit them up, it is a burden to the Sunne to give light to the adulterer to see his harlot, and it is a burden to the ayre to give breathing to a blasphemer that belcheth out his oaths against the God of heaven, nay, it is that which sinkes the damned into the bottomlesse pit, it is such as *Judas* had rather hang himselfe then indure the horror of Conscience for it: let this therefore dash the foolish conceit of them which thinke there is no pastime but in sinne; however men glory in sinne, and take delight in sucking the pleasure of sinne, yet the end will be bitternesse. Their sweet meat will have a sower sauce, and those finnes which are so sweet, will eat out all comfort from their soules, from everlasting to everlasting. *They were pricked in their hearts.*

So that the maine point which fits our aime is this sound sorrow, piercing of the soule of those that are affected with it, they were not onely pricked in their eyes to weepe for their finnes,

Use.

Rom. 8. 19.

and to say they would doe so no more: The adulterer is not only pricked in his eye, that he would see his adulterous queane, no he goeth further & sinketh into the very soule, and pierceth through the very heart; It is with sorrow that hath any substance in it, as it was with the repentance of *Ninivie*, not onely the ordinarie and refuse sort of people forsooke their sinnes, but even the King himselfe came from his throne and sat in dust and ashes, yea, the Nobles & other subjects, and the very beasts of the field did fast: So it is comparatively with this sorrow, it is not onely for the tongue to talke of sinnes, and the eye to weepe for his sinnes; but even the Queene of the soule, which is the wil it selfe, puts on sacke-cloth, and the heart and all the affections, as so many subjects follow after: It breakes out into the eye, and the frame of the heart shakes with it, and the knees knocke together, and the hands grow feeble; it is not; O Lord be mercifull unto us, and so be gone: But it must goe to your hearts, and you may weepe out your eyes, and cry your sins at the market crosse, but have you put off the will and affection of sinning as well as the tongue of sinning? the nature of this sorrow is marvelous strange, consider it. *David* saith, *Make me to heare of joy and gladnesse, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoyce*: This sorrow that did seise upon *David*, was not flight, but it breakes all the bones which are the maine pillars and props of nature, the burthen was so heavie and so great, that it made all the burthen that was in him to shake.

Psalme 51. 98.

shake. And in another *Psalm*. *My moisture is turned into the drought of Summer*: This sorrow went so deepe into his soule, that it did not only take away his outward refreshing, but it tooke away all the moist humors, the inward iuyce, the very oyle of life. It is admirable which the Prophet *Hosea* saith *Hosea 13. 8. I will meet them as a beare bereaved of her whelps, and will rend the kall of their hearts*. You must not thinke to have a whip and away, but the Lord will breake the very kall of those proud hearts of yours, rather then hee will suffer sinne to dwell in you where his throne should be: And hence it is, that this sorrow sinke many. Did you never see a soule in distresse of Conscience, he is all turned to dust and ashes; this sorrow goeth to the quicke, it is not a little touch and away, but it breaketh the heart inwardly.

For the opening of this point, let me discover these particulars: First, how the Lord workes this sorrow, and how it is brought into the soule. Secondly, I will shew you the behaviour of the soule when it is thus peirced, and this will shew the soundnesse. Thirdly, I will shew some reason why it must be so. Fourthly, I will answer some questions. Fifthly, make some uses, and therein lay downe some ends how we may helpe forward this worke when it is begunne.

For the first, I know God deales sometimes openly, and sometimes more secretly: But for the first, how this pricking comes into the soule, and how the Lord stabbs the soule, and makes at

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Psal. 14. 20.

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For the first, I know God deales sometimes openly, and sometimes more secretly: But for the first, how this pricking comes into the soule, and how the Lord stabbs the soule, and makes at

a man to thrust him through. This discovers it selfe in three particulars. First, the Lord commonly and usually lets in a kinde of amazement into the mind of a sinner, and a kind of gastering: As it is with a sudden blow upon the head, if it comes with some violence, it dazells a man, that he knowes not where he is; Just so it is generally with the soule, the Lord lets in some flashes of his truth, and darts in some evidences of his truth into the heart of a man, the hammer of Gods Law layeth a sudden blow upon the heart, and this discovers the vile nature of sinne; as when a drunkard is drunke to day, and will be so to morrow, and the minister preacheth against that sinne, and yet he will be drunke still, and the blasphemer saith, come lets sweare the minister out of the pulpit, now it may be the Lord lets in some suddaine truth, that unmasks the soule, and drives him to sudden amaze, that now he sees his corruptions to be otherwise then ever he did; commonly he doth not yet see the evill of sinne, but he is driven to a stand and a pause, and he doth not know what to say of himselfe, nor what to thinke of his sinne, there is a kinde of tumult in his thoughts, and a confused cumber, he knowes not what to make of himselfe, and he goeth away in a kind of confused distemper: Thus it was with *Paul* when he was running a long to *Damascus*, and had gotten a lustie Steed to make hast, suddenly there did shine a light from heaven, and he heard a voice from heaven saying unto him, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*

me? He marvelled at the matter, and yet he did not know what the matter was, and therefore he saith, *Who art thou Lord? What wouldest thou have me doe?*

As it was with *Saul*, so it is most commonly with us all, it may be a poore man drops into the Church, and the Lord lets in a light, and the Lord doth compas him about with some threatnings of the Law, and shewes him the nature of sinne, and the damnation that comes by it, and thereupon his thoughts beginne to hurry in one upon another, and he retyreshome, and thinks thus with himselfe, surely the preacher spake strange things to day, if all be true that he spake, then certainly my conditiō is naught, surely there is more in sinne then ever I thought of; I did alwaies thinke that such finnes as were grosse and punishable by the Law of man, were abominable, and God was incensed against them, but what? will every wicked thought sinke the soule into hell unlesse God pardon it? and is God so just, and so severe, and will he punish all sinners? and must I answer for all my petty oathes? If I shall be condemned for my words, and thoughts, it is a strange thing: well, I will inquire further of the matter, it is marvelous hard if it be true. Many a man hath beene thus, and goeth no further for the present.

Well then, Secondly, he resolves to heare the minister againe, and he fals to reading and conferring with others, to try if it be so as the minister before revealed unto him, and commonly

he goeth to heare the same minister againe, and by this meanes what with hearing and reading & conferring, he seeth the thing he doubted of is too certaine, and that the thing be questioned before is without all doubt: the Law is just, the word is plaine, if God be true, this is true, *The wages of sinne is death*, Yea of every sinfull thought: and, *He that beleeueth not, is condemned already*: so that now the sinner beginnes to consider that the condemnation threatned sleepest not, and that God hath him in chase, and that punishment that God threatens shall be executed upon him sooner or latter: thus the soule from a generall amazement, comes to see that it is so, and by this meanes he is surpris'd with a sudden feare of spirit in expectation and suspicion of what is discovered, lest God should lay it upon him, in so much that the soule saith, What if God should damne me, God may doe it: and what if God should execute his vengeance upon me, the soule feareth that the evill discovered will fall upon him, the nature of his feare is this, he knoweth there is cause of feare, and he cannot beare the evill when it is come. He saith, I am a sinfull wretch, and God may damne me for ought I know, and what if God should damne me: this is the reason of those phrases of Scripture, *Wee have not received the spirit of bondage to feare againe*, the spirit that shewes our bondage, and thence comes this feare.

Rom. 8. 15.

2. Tim. 1. 7.

Hence it is that the *Apostle saith to Timothy*, *God hath not given us the spirit of feare*: That is, the

the spirit of bondage that workes feare; & therefore the Lord saith by *Moses*; *Thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt feare day and night, thou shalt have no assurance of thy life.* It is with a soule in this feare, as it was with *Belsazzar* when he commanded the cups to be brought out of the house of the Lord, that he, and his nobles, and his concubines might quaffe in them, & brave against the God of Israel: then came a hand writing against him on the wall, and when he saw it, his thoughts troubled him and his face beganne to gather palenesse, and his knees knocked one against another, as if he should say, surely there is some strange evill appointed for me, and with that, his heart began to tremble and shake; Just so it is with this feare, he that runnes ryot in the way of wickednesse, and thinkes to despise Gods Spirit, & to hate the Lord Almighty, and to resist the work of his grace and faith within himselfe, Let us goe & heare the minister, that we may cavill at him, and persecute him.

Now it may be there comes this feare and hand-writing against him; and who knowes but that it may be thus with thee, whosoever thou art: for this is a note of the child of the devill, to hate Gods servants, and ministers. Now when a wicked man heares this, he saith, the word of God was professedly spoken against him, and these are my sinnes, and these are the Judgements and plagues threatned against them, and therefore why may not I be damned? and why may I not be plagued? and thus his heart is full of feare, & he

he begins to reason with himselfe; what, is this the nature of sinne? and are these the Judgmēts of God denounced against sinfull creatures? why then, what if God should lay these Judgemēts upon my soule? and who knoweth but God will doe so to me this day; plucke me out of the land of the living? I am sure my sinnes are such, and Gods Judgements are such threatned against them, and therefore why may not this be? and when he goeth to bed he reasoneth thus; what if I never rise more? and when he goeth from home, what if I never returne more? and God may take me with my meate in my mouth, and cast me downe into hell fire for ever. The soule being in this estate, and the heart being thus pestered and plagued with the feare of Gods wrath that followeth a man like a Jailor, he is hindred still that he cannot sinne so freely, but still the wrath of God pursueth him, and saith, Do you not feare that God may take you away in the act of sinning, and in the midst of your chambring and wantonnesse? The heart being thus pestered with this feare, it is not able to endure it, he labours to drive away this trouble and dread from his mind, and still he thinkes God is against him, and he heares some behind him saying, Thou must come to Judgement and be plagued: Now the soule labours to drinke away and play away this Sorrow. Another man haply that was a prodigall before, riseth now early and will be exceedingly busied about his occasiōs all the day long, that these things may take up his mind; &c
the

the reason is, there lyeth something at the heart and he cannot tell which way to drive away his feare, but he labours all in vaine: For this is to make up walls with untempered mortar which will presently fall downe; it is as much as a man should labour to ease himself of sinne by sinning, to give a man cold drinke in a hot burning feaver.

Thirdly, in the third place the Lord pursueth the soule, and when the heart cannot be rid of this feare, the Lord beginnes to let fly against the soule of a sinner, and discharges that evill upon him which was formerly feared, and affliction enters into the heart. The nature of feare is to feare an evill to come: now the Lord makes the soule to see that it is not only great drunkards & adulterers that are threatned, but every sinfull thought and idle word. The soule would faine have driven away this feare, but the Lord will not let him, but saith, these curses shall kindle upon thee, and shall continue for ever to thy perdition. And hence comes this sorrow, the Lord lets in some veine of his vengeance, and some secret displeasure of his, and makes sinne to stabbe the soule, and then the curse lyeth upon him, and the Lord as it were kindles the fire of his wrath upon him really, and makes him see this is that which he feared. Now his conscience is all on a flame within him, and he saith to himselfe, Thou hast sinned and offended a just God, and therefore thou must be damned and to hell thou must goe: This is the particular
feising

seising of the curse upon a sinfull soule; for this is the nature of true sorrow, if evill be to come we feare it, if evill be upon us we grieve and sorrow for it, herein is the greatest worke of all, & the Lord deales diversly as he seeth fit; specially these three wayes.

First, if God have a purpose to civilize a man, he will lay his sorrow as a fetter upon him; he only meanes to civilize him, and knocke off his fingers from base courses, as wee have knowne some in our daies; many desperate persecutors of Gods people, God casts his sorrow into their hearts, and then they say, they will persecute Gods people no more, haply they are naught still, but God confines them first: God only rippes the skinne a little, and layeth some small blow upon him: but if a man have been rude and a great ryoter, the Lord begins to serve a writ upon him, and saith, Thou art the man, to thee be it spoken, thy sins are weighed, and thou art found too light, heaven and salvation is departed from thee, thy sorrow is begunne here, never to have end hereafter, but thou must continue in endlesse torments: thou hast continued in sinne, and therefore expect the fierco anger of the Lord to be upon thee for ever, so that now the soule seeth the flashes of hell and Gods wrath upon the soule, and the terrours of hell lay hold upon the heart, and he confesseth he is so, and he hath done so: And therefore he is a poore damned creature, and then the soule labours to welter it, and it may be his conscience will be deluded by
some

some carnall minister that makes the way broader then it is, and bids him goe and drinke, and play, and worke away his sorrow: or else it may be, he stops the mouth of conscience with some outward performances: it may be his conscience saith, Thou hast committed these & these sinnes, and thou wilt be damned for them, And then he entreats conscience to be quiet & hold his peace, and he will pray in his family, and heare sermons, and take up some good courses, and thus he takes up a quiet civill course, and stayeth here a while, & at last comes to nothing: And thus God leaves him in the lurch, if he meanes only to civilize him.

But Secondly, if God intends to doe good to a man, he will not let him goe thus, and fall to a civill course: When a man begins to colour over his old sinnes, and God hath broken his teeth, that he cannot worry as formerly: but yet there is no power in him: If the Lord love that soule, he will much the more clearly reveale his sinnes unto him: God will plucke away all his chambering and wantonnesse, all his pride and peevishnesse, and pulloff his vizzard, and shew him all his sinnes, and pursue him; therefore as before God entred the blow, so now he followes it home. And hence it is that *Iob* saith, *The arrows of the Almighty sticke fast in me, and the venom thereof drinckes up my spirits, and the terrors of the Almighty encampe themselves against me every way.* And as *David* saith, *Thou keepest my eyes making, and my sinnes are ever before me.* If God love

he begins to reason with himselfe; what, is this the nature of sinne? and are these the Judgmēts of God denounced against sinfull creatures? why then, what if God should lay these Judgmēts upon my soule? and who knoweth but God will doe so to me this day; plucke me out of the land of the living? I am sure my finnes are such, and Gods Judgements are such threatned against them, and therefore why may not this be? and when he goeth to bed he reasoneth thus; what if I never rise more? and when he goeth from home, what if I never returne more? and God may take me with my meate in my mouth, and cast me downe into hell fire for ever. The soule being in this estate, and the heart being thus pestered and plagued with the feare of Gods wrath that followeth a man like a Jailor, he is hindred still that he cannot sinne so freely, but still the wrath of God pursueth him, and saith, Do you not feare that God may take you away in the act of sinning, and in the midst of your chambring and wantonnesse? The heart being thus pestered with this feare, it is not able to endure it, he labours to drive away this trouble and dread from his mind, and still he thinkes God is against him, and he heares some behind him saying, Thou must come to Judgement and be plagued: Now the soule labours to drinke away and play away this Sorrow. Another man haply that was a prodigall before, riseth now early and will be exceedingly busied about his occasiōs all the day long, that these things may take up his mind; & the

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The soule would faine have driven away this feare, but the Lord will not let him, but saith, these curses shall kinde upon thee, and shall continue for ever to thy perdition. And hence comes this sorrow, the Lord lets in some veine of his vengeance, and some secret displeasure of his, and makes sinne to stabbe the soule, and then the curse lyeth upon him, and the Lord as it were kindles the fire of his wrath upon him really, and makes him see this is that which he feared. Now his conscience is all on a flame within him, and he saith to himselfe, Thou hast sinned and offended a just God, and therefore thou must be damned and to hell thou must goe: This is the particular
seising

seising of the curse upon a sinfull soule; for this is the nature of true sorrow; if evill be to come we feare it, if evill be upon us we grieve and sorrow for it, herein is the greatest worke of all, & the Lord deales diversly as he seeth fit; specially these three wayes.

First, if God have a purpose to civilize a man, he will lay his sorrow as a fetter upon him; he only meanes to civilize him, and knocke off his fingers from base courses, as wee have knowne some in our daies; many desperate persecutors of Gods people, God casts his sorrow into their hearts, and then they say, they will persecute Gods people no more, haply they are naught still, but God confines them first: God only rippes the skinne a little, and layeth some small blow upon him: but if a man have been rude and a great ryoter, the Lord begins to serve a writ upon him, and saith, Thou art the man, to thee be it spoken, thy sins are weighed, and thou art found too light, heaven and salvation is departed from thee, thy sorrow is begunne here, never to have end hereafter, but thou must continue in endlesse torments: thou hast continued in sinne, and therefore expect the fierce anger of the Lord to be upon thee for ever, so that now the soule seeth the flashes of hell and Gods wrath upon the soule, and the terrours of hell lay hold upon the heart, and he confesseth he is so, and he hath done so: And therefore he is a poore damned creature, and then the soule labours to welter it, and it may be his conscience will be deluded by some

some carnall minister that makes the way broader then it is, and bids him goe and drinke, and play, and worke away his sorrow: or else it may be, he stops the mouth of conscience with some outward performances: it may be his conscience saith, Thou hast committed these & these sinnes, and thou wilt be damned for them, And then he entreats conscience to be quiet & hold his peace, and he will pray in his family, and heare sermons, and take up some good courses, and thus he takes up a quiet civill course, and stayeth here a while, & at last comes to nothing: And thus God leaves him in the lurch, if he meanes only to civilize him.

But Secondly, if God intends to doe good to a man, he will not let him goe thus, and fall to a civill course: When a man begins to colour over his old sinnes, and God hath broken his teeth, that he cannot worry as formerly: but yet there is no power in him: If the Lord love that soule, he will much the more clearely reveale his sinnes unto him: God will plucke away all his chambering and wantonnesse, all his pride and peevishnesse, and pull off his vizzard, and shew him all his sinnes, and pursue him; therefore as before God entred the blow, so now he followes it home. And hence it is that *Iob* saith, *The arrows of the Almighty sticke fast in me, and the venom thereof drinckes up my spirits, and the terrours of the Almighty encampe themselves against me every way.* And as *David* saith, *Thou keepest my eyes making, and my sinnes are ever before me.* If God
love

love a sinner, and meane to doe good to him, he will not let him looke off his sinne, the Lord will ferret him from his denne, and from his base courses and practises: He will be with you in all your stealing and pilfering, and in all your cursed devises, if you belong to him he will not give you over.

Iob. 7. 19.

And in another place *Iob* saith, *How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone till I swallow downe my spittle?* You had better a great deale now have your hearts humbled and broken, and see your sinnes, then to see them when there is no remedy.

Iob. 9. 18.

And in another place the holy man *Iob* saith, *Thou wilt not suffer me to take in my breath, but fillest me with bitternesse.* Your eyes have beholden vanity, & therefore now you shall see the Lords wrath against you for your sinnes; and you have breathed out your venome against the Lord of heaven, therefore now he will fill your soules with indignation, in so much that he shall breathe in his wrath, as you have breathed out your oathes against him: you have filled the Lords eyes and cares with your abominations, and the Lord of heaven shall fill you answerably with his wrath.

And in another place *Iob* saith, *Thou wilt breake a dry leafe tossed too and fro:* And yet the Lord brake him: Now the soule seeth all the evill, and the Lord pursueth him and sets conscience a worke to the full. Consider that of the *Apostle*, *That all those might be damned which beleevd not the*

the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousnesse: Even all of them. What, shall no great ones be saved? No, nor you little ones neither; all that lay not hold upon Christ, but have pleasure in unrighteousnesse, not only great ones, and such as are abominably prophane, but even all that had pleasure in wickednesse. Now conscience saith, Dost not thou know that thou art one of them that have had pleasure in unrighteousnesse, therefore away thou must goe, and thou shalt be damned: Now the soule shakes, and is driven beyond it selfe, and would utterly faint, but that the Lord upholds it with one hand, as he beates it downe with the other; he thinks that every thing is against him, and the fire burnes to consume him, and he thinks the ayre will poyson him, conscience flies in his face, and he thinks hell mouth is open to receive him, and the wrath of God hangs over his head; and if God should take away his life he should tumble head-long downe to hell.

Now the soule is beyond all shift, when it is day, he wisheth it were night; & when it is night he wisheth it were day; the wrath of God followeth him wheresoever he goeth, and the soule would faine be rid of this, but he cannot; and yet all the while the soule is not heavy and sorrowfull for sinne, he is burdened, and could be content to throw away the punishment and horror of sinne, but not the sweet of sinne: as it is with a child that takes a live coale in his hand, thinking to play with it, when he feesles fire in it, he throws it away, he doth not throw it away, because it

is blacke, but because it burnes him; So it is here: A sinfull wretch will throw away his sinne, because of the wrath of God that is due to him for it, and the drunkard will be drunke no more, but if he might have his queanes and his pots without any punishment or trouble, he would have them with all his heart, he loves the blacke and sweet of sinne well enough, but he loves not the plague of sinne.

Foolish people (saith the Prophet) *are plagued for their sinne.* If thou roarest for disquiet of heart, and thy bones are broken; it is because of thy sin; thy pride, and drunkenness, and uncleanness, brought this upon thee; If thou wilt be eased of the plague, throw away thy corruptions, if you would have the effect removed, then take away the cause.

There are two things in sinne which make a man sorrowfull; first sinne it selfe that doth defile a man, and separate him from God: Secondly the punishment of sinne. Now the sinner lookes either so far at sinne as it causeth punishment, or as it separateth from God.

Haply a sinner will come to this, he will be content to carry his heart, and that furiously against sinne, because it brings Judgements and plagues; But thus farre a hypocrite may goe, a Judas, a Caine, a Saul: Caine would say his sinnes were greater then could be forgiven: because he had killed his brother; but he could never see his sinne so vile; because it did separate him from God.

Thus

Thus you see how God enters the blow, and followeth it home upon the soule, but yet for all this, God may leave a man as he did *Judas* and *Saul*, and there is an end of them.

Now in the third place, if the Lord purpose to doe good to the soule, he will not suffer him to be quiet here, but he openeth the eye of the soule further, and makes him sorrow, not because it is a great and shamefull sinne, but the Lord saith to the soule, even the least sinne makes a separation betweene me and thee; and the heart begins to reason thus, Lord is this true? is this the smart of sinne? and is this the vile nature of sinne? O Lord! how odious are these abominations that cause this evill, and though they had not caused this evill, yet this is worse then the evill, that they make a separation betweene God and my soule. Good Lord, why was I borne? and why came I into this world? why did God continue me here, and all the meanes of grace for my good, and all the comforts of this life, whereby my course might be maintained and made lesse tedious? what if I did want this horrour of heart, and had all the ease in the world? and what if I might be free from all misery on earth? what were this, so long as I had sin in my soule, that makes a separation betweene God & my soule? I was made to be one with God, & to have communion with God, & to obey his comandements, but I have departed from God by sin & departed from his comandements.

A Godlesse and a gracelesse man is a miserable man though he were never plagued at all; I

was made to honour God, and I have done nothing else but dishonour him: I was made to subject my selfe to the good will of God, but I have withdrawne my selfe from his will; and this is my misery and my plague; If I had beene in hell, and had not had sinne, I had beene a happy man, and though I had beene in heaven and had had sin I had beene a miserable man; because it makes a separation betweene me and my God.

Nay, the sinner still thus pleads with himselfe, what is this to me that I am rich and miserable, honourable and damned, to have quiet, and ease here, and a benumbed conscience, and so in the end to be throwne among the devils for dogges meat? If I had all the ease, wealth, honours, and friends in the world, so long as I have this vile heart I could not be a happy man.

If you were never pierced for your sinnes your condition is woefull, you shall have enough of it one day. you that are never troubled for your sinnes but goe on smoothly, know this, I charge you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, though you had all the ease and pleasures in the world, so long as you have these proud, sturdy, unfaithfull hearts, you are as miserable creatures as ever breathed upon the face of the earth.

Thus the heart complaines as sometimes the lamenting Church did, Woe to us that we have sinned, not because we have deserved plagues, but because we have sinned, woe to us, for the God of grace is gone from us, and the God of mercy is gone from us, because we have sinned;

and

and the God of blessednesse is gone from us because we haue walked in cursed waies. Hold here and then your sorrow goeth right, if the soule can say, though I have no horriour of heart, yet if I have this sinfull heart, I am a miserable man.

Then thy sorrow is right. Sometimes God deales thus punctually with a man; first, he drives it to an amazement, Secondly, he workes in him marvelous feare of evill that is to come, Thirdly, he possesseth the soule with the feeling of the evill, and so forth, as in the former particulars, but yet is bound to no time, and therefore we must not limit the holy One of Israel: it is true, the Lord may presse in upon the soule, and worke all this on the sudden, but yet experience hath proved, and reason will confirme it, when God workes never so suddely, he affecteth the soule, thus whe a poore soule commeth in the congregation, he layeth some truth upon him, that is new and terrible, so that the soule dare not deny it, nor yet fully resist it, but is in a maze, and by and by it may be the Lord opens his eyes and awakens his conscience, and makes that more evident to the soule, and so immediately arrests the soule, and then sorrow falls in a maine upon it; and the heart thinkes God meant my courtes, and the minister spake against him, and he must go downe to hell suddenly; so that sometimes the sinner cries out in the congregation, and though he contain himselfe for a time, yet he buckles under the burthen; all this may be done at one sermon, in one doctrine, or in one part of an use, but usually this is

Gods maner of working. But now the question in the next place will be this, how doth the soule behave it selfe under this sorrow?

I answer; when the soule is sorrowfull for sin, as it is sinne, and as it is a breach of the Law of God, it may appeare by these two particulars. First, the soule is most of all weary of sin, because of the vile nature of it. Secondly, it is restlesse in importuning the Lord for mercy and pardon for it.

First, the heart is most of all weary of the burthen of sinne, as it is sinne, and thinkes it the greatest burthen in the world: as a man that hath a great burthen on his backe wrincherh this way and that way, and if he cannot remove it, yet he will ease it; so the heart useth all meanes, and taketh all courses, that if it were possible, it may cast off and ease it selfe of the vilenesse of sinne, & plague of sinne. This wearisomnesse of the soule, which followeth the weight of sinne, makes it self knowne in these three particulars.

First, his eye is ever upon it, his mouth is ever speaking of it, and he is alwaies complaining against it, and he is readily content to take shame to himselfe for it. If a man have a sore place in his body, his eye, and his finger will ever be upon it: so it is with the soule. As the people when they apprehended the hideous wrath of God against them, they entreated Samuel to pray for them; for (say they) *We have added to all our sinnes this specially in asking of thee a King* in such a way as this may be done.

1. Sam. 12. 19.

As it is with a man that hath the stone in the reines,

reines, or some stitch in his side, or where ever his paine or trouble is, there he complaines most; and when the Physitiā comes to feele on his body he saith, is it here? no with he: is it here? and whē he commeth to the right place, he saith, there it is, cut there, and launce there: So it is with a man that is stung with the vile nature of sinne, when he comes to complaine of sinne, he doth not altogether complaine of his horroure, nor of death; but he saith, O! that chambring and wantonnesse, that pride and stubbornnesse and rebellion of heart: O! that ryoting, and malice against the Saints of God: The soule seeth this, & complaines of it, and takes shame to himselfe for it; as *Paul* deales with himselfe: which argues a heart truly weary of corruption. I was a persecutor, and a blasphemer, and the like; and I was received to mercy; he doth not say, I was in horroure or in trouble, but I was a persecutor: he doth not say, I was thus and thus plagued, but I was an injurious person to Gods Church, there he was weary, and there he would be eased, if it were possible. Let all vile wretches tremble at it, for God hath enough for all *Pharoes* and *Nymrods*.

Away therefore with all these Lapwing cries and complaints, it is the nature of that bird to cry & flutter most when she is farthest from her neast, because by this meanes she would cozen passengers, and have her young ones: So it is with an hypocrite, he will complaine a great way off of his sinne, and have some secret turning. It is admirable to see how hard it is for a man to lay

open his finnes before God, it is a signe that he is never weary of sinne, that he is not willing truly to confesse his sinne, when he is lawfully called to it, and when he pretends ~~it~~ it is true sometimes God will accept of a confession made to him in secret, if it be in truth, but when God will have a man unbowell himselfe, and all his abominations, and when a man commeth and desires comfort in this kinde, then for a man to cover his sinne, and to complaine a farre off of some ordinary corruption, which every poore child of God is troubled with, and that particular lust whereof he is guilty for shame he is not willing to acknowledge; this argueth that the heart is naught and never sound this wearisomnesse of sinne: I know that the best heart under heaven will have many windings and turnings; but the Lord will never leave the heart in this case, till he come to deale plainly, and say, these are my finnes, and this is my uncleannes; and this is my secret theft, and thus he openeth himselfe at large, to that man whom God hath appointed for that end: but some are content to confesse and complaine of their finnes when God hath them upon the racke, as Judas did; but marke, his punishment is the greatest cause of his complaint, and hell is his greatest feare, he is weary of sinne because of the plague and punishment due to it, but he never regards the vilenesse of sinne in this respect, because it makes a separation betweene God and his soule. Secondly, as the soule complains of the vile nature of sin and desires to have his face covered

covered with shame, for it is so in the second place; it will never meddle with nor give way to any thing that is sinfull, so farre as it is revealed, so to be setting aside sudden passions, and violent temptations, but when a man is come to himselfe againe, his conscience is awakened; this is sure, the soule will not dare to tamper with any thing that is sinfull: why? becaus it hath bin wearied with the burthen of it before. It is the practice of the lamenting Church in *Hosea*; *Asbur shall not save us, we will not ride on horses, neither will we say to the workes of our hands: Te are our Gods, for with thee the fatherles finde mercy.* That is, we wil meddle no more with any thing that is sinfull, whereby we have dishonoured God heretofore, for they had trusted in their horses, & made Idols, and relyed upon them, but now they cast them cleane off.

Hosea. 14. 3.

The reason is, because when the soule seeth sin as it is sinne, and that it is a burthen to the soule, and the heart is now weary of it, it will lay no more weight upon it, because now the heart is weary enough already. The blasphemers feares an oath, & the adulterer shakes to see his quean, and he trembles to see the place where his abominations have beene committed, and now his heart loathes all these. If a man hath beene once at deaths doore by drinking deadly poyson, he will never tast of it more; Nay, he will not endure the sight of that cup, he wil rather fare hardly, and rather starve then eate and drinke that which shall kill him, so (saith the soule) it is sin that hath made a separation betweene me and

my God, this pride, or this uncleannesse had been the death of me if God had not beene mercifull unto me, and therefore I will rather sinke and die then meddle with these sinnes any more.

And hence it is, that if any thing come under the colour of corruption, the soule that is truly weary of sinne, saith, Omitting of this duty is evil, and therefore I will not omit it, the doing of this action is sinfull, and therefore I will not doe it, because the sinne is worse then the plague, he will take the lesse evill of the two, as we use to doe in other matters: if a man hate his sinne for the plague, then so soone as that is removed, he returns to his sinne againe, the blow was but weake. This was the fault in Judas his sorrow he did see and confesse his sinnes, and bewaile them, and did more then many will doe now a daies, & tooke shame to himselfe, but though he confessed and complained of his sinne, yet he would rather commit murder upon himselfe, then under-goe the horrour of sinne, if he had beene weary of sin because of the loathsomenesse of it, he would not have layed violent hands upon himselfe: These two passages are every where, where true saving grace is.

Now in the third place, if God should deprive a sinner of his judgement and horrour of conscience, yet if his heart be truly apprehensive of sin as it is sinne, he cannot lay aside his sorrow, so long as sin prevailes and gets head against him, and dogges him up and downe, nothing will content him, but the removall of his sinne: That soule
which

which was cured by any other meane save onely by Christ, was never truly wounded for sinne: If ease cures him, then horreur was his vexation: If honour cure him, then shame was his burthen: If riches cure him, the poverty did most of all pinch him: but if the soule were truly wounded for sin, then nothing can cure him but a Saviour to pardon him, and grace to purge him: for what is that to the soule, to have ease and liberty, nay to be in heaven, if he have a naughty rebellious heart, nay if it were possible for him to be in heaven with his sinfull heart, it would tyre him and burthen him there: Therefore those soules that are cured by any thing saving by Christ, those soules were never truly wounded for sinne as sinne: It may be horror and vexation lay heavy upon the, but it was not the stroke of sinne that did trouble them.

Then gather up all, he that which out of the vilenesse which he seeth in sinne is content to take shame to himselfe, and will not meddle with his sinne, neither carelessly nor willingly, and is not cured by any thing saving by Christ, this man be-
haveth himselfe truly in the first place. Thus much of the tryall.

Secondly, againe, the soule is restless in importuning the Lord for mercy, and will not be quieted till it get some evidence of Gods favour, the soule will take no nay, it will not be contented unles it can finde some glimps of acceptance through the goodnesse of God in Christ. This is plaine, if a man be burthened with a weight, or
some

Acts. 9. 17.

some heavy load that is laid upon him, if that he be fallen under his burthen, he lyeth there like to die, and if there be none neere to succour him, all his care is to cry out for helpe, and though he seeth no man yet he cryeth out, O help, help, for the Lords sake. *Saul* was without sight three daies, and no doubt he prayed to God all that while, as if he had resolved to give him no rest till he had found mercy: this is the nature of true sorrow, it ever drives a man to God, whereas reprobate sorrow drives a man from God: Nay, it may be, though the heart thinkes it shall never finde mercy, yet the Lord carryeth on the soule in an earnest desire, and using the meanes, and will not off from God, and from his word and sacraments and ordinances, Nay, though he sometime concludes that he shall never get mercy, nor get power against his corruptions; and then one saith, You had best leave off all; Nay, (saith the soule) I cannot be worse then I am, if I goe to hell I will goe this way. There is a kinde of sorrow in the heart which is heavenly and godly, but reprobate sorrow even drives a man from God, and maketh him say, if I am damned I am damned, if I be a reprobate I am so. O thou wretch, is this all? If a poore creature that is pressed under his burthen cryeth for helpe, when almost nature & strength doth faile, he crieth still for helpe, and that is all he can say, and so he dyes, and this is the last word that he speaks with a soft still voice O help, help: So it is with the soule of a poore languishing sinner, when the heart is burthened with

with the vilenesse of the nature of sinne and the separation from God by the same, he doth not now cry ease and liberry and riches Lord: No, he cries mercy mercy Lord on this vile heart of mine, and give me power against these mighty lusts: & after many means using when he is going the way of all flesh, his last word is mercy.

Me thinkes I see this poore soule slyding away and saying, how many sinnes have I committed, Oh mercy, mercy, Christ. And this is the last word he speaketh, and so he dies; and no question but mercy shall be given him. It is not a *Lord have mercy upon me*, and *God forgive me* will serve the turne: No, it is otherwise, if ever God set home this worke, he will make you restlesse in seeking mercy, and nothing shall content you but mercy to pardon your sinnes, and grace to subdue them, and the soule thinkes if mercy would but shine upon him, and if his sinnes were taken away that they might never hinder him in a Christiā course, he were a happy man: this is the frame of the soule that is truly weary of sinne.

When the young man came to Christ, and played fayre and a farre off, and said he could do any thing. Well (said Christ) if thou canst doe any thing, then *goe and sell all that thou hast and give it to the poore*: but he went away sorrowfull from Christ (saith the text) he did not come to Christ sorrowfull, but wēt away sorrowfull from Christ whereas if he had beene burthened with sinne in sinne, he would have come to Christ sorrowfull, and say, Now I see Lord the world is a heavy

Mat. 19. 21.

but

burthē, O Lord help me against it, give me mercy to pardon me, and grace to remove it : But our Sauieur heard no more of the young man, and as it is in the text, this pricking of heart made the Jewes come to *Peter* saying, *Men and brethren, What shall wee doe?* They did not as a great many say now a dayes, if the minister were far enough off from me, and I from him, I were happy, I cannot be quiet for him: these are reprobate speeches: but the sinner that is truly humbled and burthened with sinne as sinne, he comes home, and is resolved to wait for mercy till the Lord sheweth mercy to him. Carnall sorrow sent *Is- das* and *Achitophel* to the gallows, but godly sorrow ever drives a man to God.

When *Jonah* was in the Whales belly he said, Lord, though I cannot come to thy temple, I will looke towards it: so a sorrowfull soule that is truly burthened with sinne, will say, though I cannot come to heaven, yet I will looke up to heaven: and though I never finde mercy, yet for mercy will I wait: thy mercy onely Lord shall content me.

The next thing is this, we thinke of all things our sinne most pleasant, and nothing so grievous as Gods commandements, and therefore will these sinnes wherein we have taken so much content, will these so wound the soule; why should sinne so wound and pierce the soule? The reasons are these three.

The first is this, the soule must be pierced with sinne, because it is the greatest evill of the soule

soule, and therefore if the heart doe but truly apprehend it, it cannot but it must be most of all burthened with it: If a man beare two weights on his backe, that is most grievous which is most heavy; if he feele the burthen, as the nature of it requires, it will most presse the shoulders of him that beares it; if the one be thirtie and the other fortie pound weight, nature will be most burthened with the greatest weight: so there is no evill so properly and directly evill to the soule, as the evill of sinne: Punishment deprives the soule of ease and quiet, but sin deprives the soule of God, and the maine end for which it was created, through which the soule must be happy, or for the want of this it must be accursed. Now sinne is as it were ten thousand weight, when as sorrow and shame and punishment, they are but a hundred weight: if it were possible for a man to have all the ease and quiet in the world, and to be in heaven, yet if he had a soule heart and a sinfull soule, he were a miserable cursed creature; and if it were possible to be in hell, free from sinne, he were a happy man. There is nothing that can do properly good to the soule but God, and nothing can properly doe any hurt to the soule but sinne, which estrageth the heart from God, which is the chiefest good. If a man had all the pleasures and contents the world would afford, nothing will satisfie the soule but God, and if the soule were in horror, and had the presence of God with it, it would not but be comforted and quieted therewith, it is possible. Nay, God doth it also;
be

he makes the soule of a man feeble the burthen of sinne because of the vilenesse of it, as well as of the plague and punishment of it.

When the Lord will fasten a mans sinne to his conscience, he is able to force the soule to apprehend the evill of sinne as well as the torment and plague of sinne.

And the ground is this, take the soule as it is polluted with corruption and all abominations, sinne is very croſſe to the nature of the soule, it is a creature and a created thing by God, and hath his being from God, and the soule as it is a creature, was made for God: and howsoever the power of sinne prevailed with it and made it fall short of God, yet the nature of the soule still, considering it as it is a creature, it is made for God, and desires to have fellowship and union with God: therefore marke how I dispute: If sinne be the worst evill to the soule, as crossing the end of it, and depriving the soule of his chiefest good, then the Lord is able to make the soule see sinne as the greatest evill to the soule; But sinne croſſeth the end of the creature, for the end of the creature is Godward, and to have union and fellowship with God. Therefore the Lord is able to make the soule see the evill of sinne as well as the evill of punishment: Therefore it is no wonder that the heart be most of all pierced with sinne.

The second reason is, because by sound sorrow the soule is truly prepared and fitted for the Lord Jesus Christ, and no other way then this:

this: namely, when the soule sees the burthen of sin as sin: For when the soule comes to seeke sinne in the proper colours of it, and so be affected with the loathfomnesse that is in that sin, which hath formerly over-ruled it: Now the soule begins to renounce the power of that sinne, and to withdraw himselfe from under the dominion of his corruptions, so that the union betweene sin and the soule is now broken, and roome is prepared & way is made for the Lord Jesus to come into the soule; when sorrow hath wearied the heart and loosened it from the love of sinne then the heart is fitted for Christ. As it is with a vessell that hath beene for dishonour, if a man will turne the nature of it and make it a vessell of honour, he must not only heat it a little, but he must melt it thoroughly, and then it is fit to be a vessell of honour. So the soule of every sinfull man and woman is a vessell of dishonour, and sinne hath marvelously polluted them. Now if you will have your hearts fitted for Christ, you must not only have your hearts warmed a little by humiliation, but you must have them melted all to pieces, and the heart must be content to part with all abominations whatsoever, that so the Lord may take place in it, and rule over it even for ever. First, cast out the *strong man*, and then the Lord Christ wil come in and *take possession* of the heart, sinne and satan are the strong man, and the Lord Christ *binds* this *strong man* and casts him out, when he sheweth the vilenesse of sinne; and trieth the heart with the burthen of it, and binds the

the soule to good behaviour; that now the heart is readily content that Christ should come and doe all in the soule.

Many have gone a great way in the strok of humiliatio, and yet because it neuer went through to the quicke, they have gone backe againe, and become as vile as ever they were; I have knowne men, that the Lord hath layed a heavy burthen upon them, and awakened their consciences, and driven them to a desperate extremity, and yet after much anguish and many resolutions and the prizing of Christ, as they conceived, and after the renouncing of all, to take Christ upon his owne termes, as they imagined; and even these when they have beene eased and refreshed, and God hath taken off the trouble, they have come to be as crosse to God and all goodnesse, and as full of hatred to Gods children as ever, and worse too.

Now why did these fall away? Why were they never Justified and Sanctified? and why did they never come to beleeve in the Lord Jesus? The reason is, because their hearts were never pierced for their sinne; they were never kindly loosened from it; this is the meaning of that place in *Ier.* *Plow up the fallow grounds of your hearts, and sow not among thornes*, it is nothing else; but with sound saving sorrow to have the heart pierced with the terrours of the Law seising upon it, and the vilehess of sinne wounding the conscience for it. The heart of a man is compared to fallow ground that is unfruitfull; you must not sow among thornes and thistles, first plow it, and lay

it

Ier. 4. 3.
opened.

it bare and naked, and then cast in your seed. If a man plow here a furrow, and there a furrow, & leave here and there a bawke, he is never like to have a good croppe, there will grow so many thistles and so much grasse, that it will choake the seed: our hearts are this ground, and our corruptions are these thornes and thistles. Now if a man be content to finde some sinne hatefull, because it is shamefull, but will keepe herein lust & there a lust, he will never make any good husbandry of his heart: though a faithfull minister should sow all the grace of the promises in his soule, he would never get any good by them, but the corruptions that remaine in the heart will hinder the saving worke thereof.

Therefore plow up all, & by sound sowing sorrow labour to have thy heart barren for sin, and estranged from it, and this is good husbandry indeed; the want of this was the wound of the thorny ground as you may see in the parable, those hearers had much of the world in them, much ease, and profit, and pleasure, and these choaked the word and made it utterly unfruitfull, and so they never received comfort nor mercy afterwards. This is that which the Prophet David saith, *A contrite and a humble heart O God thou wilt not despise.* If you would have your hearts such as God may take delight in, and accept, you must have them broken and contrite. David saith *The Lords voice breaketh the Cedars of Libanus.* So the voice of the Lord like lightning must thunder into the corrupt heart of sinfull carnall man.

163

Mary:

Psalms. 51. 17.

163

Psal. 51.

A contrite heart is that which is powdered all to dust, as the Prophet saith, *Thou bringest us to dust, and thou shalt sayest, returne againe wee sinner of men.* So the heart must be broken all in pieces, to powder, and the union of sinne must be broken; and it must be content to be weaned from all sinne, as you may make any thing of the hardest flint that is broken all to dust. So it is with the heart that is thus fitted and fashioned. If there be any corruption that the heart lingers after, it will hinder the worke of preparation: If a man cut off all from a branch, save one sliver; that will make it grow still that it cannot be ingrafted into another stocke. So though a mans corrupt heart depart from many sinnes & scandalous abominations: yet if he keepe the love of any one sinne, it will be his destruction: as many a man after horror of heart hath had a love after some base lust or other and is held by it so fast, that he can never be ingrafted into the Lord Jesus. This one lust may breake his necke and send him downe to hell. So then, if the soule onely can be fitted for Christ by sound sorrow, then this must needs pierce the heart before Christ can come there, but the heart cannot be fitted for Christ without this, and therefore of necessity, the heart must be truly wounded with sorrow for sinne.

The last reason is this, because by this meane the heart comes to see a high price upon Christ and grace, either the grace of God offered in the gospell, or the good way which God hath commanded us to walke in. If the heart finde the great

3.
Sorrow for sin
makes us see a
high price upon
Christ.

rest

test evill to be in horror and vexation, then ease and quietnesse from these will be the greatest good, but now the soule seeth grace to be truly precious, because it seeth sinne to be truly vile: and this is the end why the Lord makes the soule see the vilenesse of sinne, that the heart may be brought to see the excellency in Christ and prize him above all.

Now there are two questions to be answered. First, whether this sound sorrow be a work of saving grace, and such a worke as cannot be in a reprobate.

Quest. 1.

Secondly, whether God doth worke this in all men that are truly converted and brought home to Christ, and whether he workes this in all alike or no.

Questio 2.

For the first, whether it this a worke of saving grace yea or no, and such as cannot be in a reprobate: for answer to this,

Ans.

First I will shew the order that this worke hath to the other workes.

Secondly, I will shew the difference of this from sanctifying sorrow, and yet it comes to be sanctifying sorrow.

For the order first, the heart in this worke is not yet conceived to be in Christ, but only to be fitted and prepared for Christ.

If you stoppe here in your consideration, and dispute not of any worke to come, it is only in the way to be ingrafted into Christ, but so, that undoubtedly that soule which hath this worke upon it shall have faith powered into it: for this

Luk 19-10.

is the meaning of that place, *The Lord Iesus came to seek and save that which was lost.* Now to be lost is not because a man is sinfull and miserable in himselfe; but he is *lost* that seeth the evill of sinne, and the punishment that comes thereby, & comes to be lost in his owne apprehension, in regard of his owne estate; and he that is thus lost shall be sure to have Christ and salvation by him. It was the end why Christ came, and therefore it shall be fulfilled.

But he that is truly sensible of his sinne and the vilenes of it, and abhors himself for it, he is truly lost; he is not yet settled on Christ, for then he were safe enough, but he is truly sensible of his lost estate, and therefore shall have faith and Christ, though yet he partake not of them; yet he shall be everlastingly saved and redeemed by Iesus Christ.

Quest.

And therefore this is an idle question, what if a man die in this worke of preparation before he come to have faith?

Answ.

I say it is an idle question, because it is impossible that he which is thus prepared for Christ and grace, but he shall have them before he die. As the Prophet saith; *Behold I will send my messenger before me to prepare my way.* When the heart is fitted and prepared, the Lord Christ comes immediately into it. Therefore is the soule, & the way is the preparation for Christ, so is the soule yet to be conceived in the way of preparation for Christ, not to have any formall worke of grace whereby he is occupied in repaying for himselfe.

Mal 3.1.2.

The next thing is the difference of the sorrow
saying sorrow from sanctifying sorrow; and you
must know there is a double sorrow. First, there
is a sorrow in preparation; Secondly, there is a
sorrow in sanctification.

The sorrow of the soule in this preparative
worke of it, is thus to be conceived; when the
word of God leaves an impression upon the heart
of a man, so that the heart of it selfe is as it were
a patient, and onely beares the blow of the Spi-
rit; the Spirit of the Lord and the over-powering
force of the same forceth the soule to beare the
word; and hence come all those phrases of Scrip-
ture, as *wounded, pierced, pricked*, and the like, on-
ly in the passive voice; Because the soule is a pa-
tient, and the Lord by the almighty hand of his
Spirit, breakes in upon the soule, so that this sor-
row in preparation is rather a sorrow wrought
upon me, then any worke comming from any spi-
rituall ability in my selfe. This is sorrow in pre-
paration when I am a patient, and wherein I re-
ceive the worke of the Spirit, and am forced and
framed by the spirit to doe that which I doe in
this kinde.

But then Secondly there is a sorrow in sancti-
fication, and that is thus, that sorrow that doeth
flow from a spirituall principle of Grace, & from
that power which the heart hath formerly recei-
ved from Gods Spirit. For sanctification comes
after justification; and after the soule hath recei-
ved faith and grace, then the heart hath a new
power given unto it, whereby it is able to set

Twofold sor-
row.

What preparative
sorrow is.

What sorrow
in sanctifica-
tion is.

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Rom. 8.30.

Every saving
worke is not a
sanctifying.

What prepar
two follow in

Simile.

What power
sanctified
all

forth it selfe into my holy action; so that in this
a man is a free worker; whereas I know in pre-
paration is a worke wrought on me; and I am a
patient and doe onely endure it; but I have not
any spirituall power to doe any thing of my selfe.
Now mark what I say; both these are saving for
relief; but they differ marvelously; many thinke
that every saving worke is a sanctifying worke,
is false; for every saving worke is not a sancti-
fying worke, as the apostle saith, *These whom he cal-
leth, whom he will justify, and whom he justifies, he
glorifies*. Glorification implies sanctification here
impart, and glory forever hereafter; there is a sa-
ving worke and calling, but yet not a sanctifying
worke; for *unction* is when God so farre enlight-
neth the soule, as to blacke the heart and to
make it away from corruption to him; and then
afterwards God brings the heart to be justified,
and then sanctified; they are first called, and then
justified, and then sanctified. *For as many as have
received his grace, they shall also receive the power
of the Holy Ghost, which shall sanctify you in every
kind of good conversation, as the law of life shall
bring forth the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy,
peace, meekness, goodness, faith, long suffering,
gentleness, self control; against such things there is
no law.*

The difference of these two is this; the first
is to be sanctified in the heart, as it is with the
wheels of a clocke; that when they are wrong
what must a man doe to set this clocke right?
He must first stoppe it, so as it shall no
longer wrong; and then turne it and set the
wheels right; now altho while the clocke is a
piece of time, the wheels are doth all
Secondly, when it is thus set right, then the
workman must lay his hands and weight on it,
and now the wheels can move of themselves by
virtue of the power and weight they have gotten
of

John

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of

so that these two are plaine different actions, as
 is just so it is with the reason of the soule, the will
 and the affections which are as the wheels of
 this great and cruel chariot (for the soule goes
 helward and sinward, till the minde knowe no-
 thing, and the will and the affections embrace no-
 thing but hell and sinne) now to bring these into
 any holy order, the Lord must stoppe the soule,
 and that is done by the discovery of sinne, and by
 this humiliation of heart; when the Lord lets a
 man see his sinne and faith to him, If thou wilt
 have sinne thou must have hell and all toge-
 ther; and then the soule saith, if it be so, I will
 meddle no more with sinne, the adulterer will
 be uncleane no more, and the drunkard will be
 drunke no more.

Now when the soule is thus turned, it looketh
 heavenward; and God wand, and is content
 Christ should rule over it. All this while the
 soule is a meeke patient, this is a saving worke &
 a worke of Gods Spirit where ever it is soundly
 wrought, and will in the end be faith and grace.
 But now when the soule is heavenward &
 God justifies a poore sinner; and plunkes him
 to himselfe by faith; and adopts him to be his
 child; then the Lord gives him of his Spirit, and
 this is as the weight of the soule, then by the pow-
 er of that spirit the soule is able to runne right, &
 hath a principle of grace in it, and the poise of the
 spirit of grace which doth possesse the soule,
 makes it able freely to mount for sinne, and to
 have the heart enlarged in the service of God this

is mainly the sanctifying worke.

Quest.

The second question is this, whether doth the Lord worke this in all, and whether doth he worke it in all alike or no. For I perceive the hearts of many poore Christians are gasping for this, the Lord never wrought upon me in this maner, and my heart was never thus battered & bruised, therefore how shall we know, whether the Lord doth worke this in all or no, and in all alike?

Answer.

For the answer of this question, I will handle three things, First, the worke is the same in all, Secondly, the maner is different in the most; Thirdly, many have it in them and yet perceive it not how or when it was wrought.

First, this work of contrition of heart is wrought in every one in this worke of preparation, before he is, or can be planted into Christ: for the truth of this and the substantiall nature of it, Scripture is plaine, and reason is pregnant. Scriptures are many, I will only name three, as that in *Luke*, our Lord Jesus Christ came to seeke and to save that which was lost.

Luke 19.10.

The qualifica-
tion of those
whom Christ
will save.

We may observe two things, first, the qualification of that party whom Christ will seeke and save, he must be a *lost* man in his owne apprehension: secondly, see the certainty of salvation of such a one, Christ came for this end, he came to seeke up and save that which was lost. Now Christ will not misse of his end, he came for the *lost* sheepe, then the lost sheepe he will have, & though the lost sheepe cannot seek nor save themselves, yet Christ will save them.

Thus

Thus you see, all men must be thus disposed before they can be saved; and if thus fitted and disposed, they shall be certainly saved; It is not enough for a man to be in a miserable estate and damnable condition, but he must also see it, and his heart must be truly affected with it, and finde and feele the burthen of it; not so much for the punishment, but for the sinne whereby his heart is estranged from God, and also God from his soule.

Now that the sensiblenesse of his lost condition is there spoken of, and this man that hath it shall be saved, may appeare, because the sensiblenesse of a mans condition in regard of the punishment of sinne is such, as a man may have, and yet never have grace and salvation: *Cain* had the feeling of Gods wrath and felt the punishment of it, and so did *Judas* also, and yet they were never sought up nor saved.

The second place of Scripture, is out of *Iohn*, *No man cometh to me except the father draweth him*, by *comming* you must conceive beleeving, (as in that famous place of *Iohn*, *He that comes to me shall never hunger; and he that beleeueth in me, shall never thirst*;) Now this text implieth two things, and they are professedly granted by the intendment of the *Apostle*, for the people murmured why the *Pharisees* and the *great ones* beleeved not and followed not *Christ*, to whom *Christ* answers, *Unless my father from heaven draw them they cannot come*; so that these two things are cleare, first, a man must be drawne, secondly, if he be drawne he shall surely come,

Iohn 6.44.

Iohn 6.45.

This

This drawing is thus much, when God opens the eye of a man and makes knowne his sinne, & sets downe the heart in the acknowledgement of sinne, so that he fees the vilenesse and the burthen of it, and is content to part with the same.

When the Lord shall lay all a mans abominations upon him, all his adulteries, and all his thefts, and now he sees what it is to depart from a blessed and a pure God; O then, he will be drunke, and uncleane, and malicious no more, because the heart is weary of it, and is content to part with it.

From hence I reason thus, true drawing is ever accompanied with true beleeving; but this sense of sinne in regard of the punishment of it, is not alwaies accompanied with true beleeving, but a man must see his sinne further in the vilenes of it, and in the abomination of it, and then he shall undoubtedly beleeve.

The streame of the whole Scripture runnes this way, as that in *Matthew*, Come to me all ye that are weary and heavy laden and I will ease you: and this is that which *Esay* saith, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me: because he hath anointed me to preach glad tidings to the mecke, he hath sent me to binde up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, & the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable day of the Lord, and to comfort them that mourne: Nay, the garment of gladnesse is fitted only for the broken hearted, as in the third verse of that chapter, To appoint unto them that mourne in Sion, to give unto them beauty

Mat. 11. 28.

Esay 61. 1.

for ashes, and the yole of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise, for the spirit of heaviness. Nay, the promises of largesse extend in Scripture, doe either expressely belong unto such as are broken in heart, or else they doe imply so much that a man must be so before ever God canoe will accept of him.

As in the Revelation, *But, every one that will, let him come freely, and take of the water of life freely for ever.* So then, some may say, though a man were not broken hearted, yet if he will take this water of life, he shall live for ever. Nay, but except he be broken hearted and humbled, he will never take it, as a man must have grace, so he must with the water of life: now to will the water of life is this, to choose grace as the chiefest good, and to prize grace more then any thing else in the world, and to esteeme the Lord Jesus and his grace truly precious. As a man is said to chuse a woman when he is content to part with all for her, and to have her for her grace sake, so a man must part with sinne and himselfe, and whatsoever is deare to him, that he may have grace, now he will not part with sinne, unless he be weary and burthened with it, and therefore this wearying implies the burthening of the heart with sinne, thus much for the proofe of Scripture.

Now to adde some reason that may compell our judgement to yeeld to this truth, and they are twaine. First, from the qualification of mans heart naturally, and secondly from what he must be

1. Cor. 12:13

Revel. 22:17.

Object.

Answer.

2. Cor. 12:13

2. Cor. 12:13

be, before he can receive Christ,

Conclusion 1

I will discover my thoughts in foure conclusions, and thus I reason. It is a confessed case (I conceive) that every man by nature doth entertaine sinne as his God, and seekes and loves that most of all, himselfe, and his sinne, is his God. In this case it is his chiefest good, and the heart will not, nay, it cannot, be content to part with it; What is the cause that we propound Christ, and grace, and salvation, to a company of poore simple creatures, and yet the counsells, the promises, and commandements of God prevaile not with the heart of them, nor awe them, but still they will have their sinnes, and the offer of Christ and grace lies in the dust; the adulterer will have his queans, and the drunkard will have his cups, & they will not suffer the word to plucke away their corruptions, but they will have them though they be damped for them, what doth this argue, but that sinne is their God. Nay, it is cleare, not only in palpable reason, but the Scripture is evidence this way: It is the match Christ offers to the young man, if he would *sell all and follow him, he should have treasure in heaven*; he was covetous, and this was a fayre offer for a little trash, he should have everlasting life; now the text saith, *he went away sorrowfull*, he would rather have his covetousnes and his wealth, then heaven.

Conclusion 2

The second conclusion is this, there cannot be two Gods in one heart, two Kings in one throne nor two Suns in one firmament; you cannot have Christ, and yet be an underling to sinne; will

Christ

Christ be a Physician to heale you that you may have your finnes still: No, our Saviour is plaine to the contrary, *you cannot serve God and Mammon*; If the adulterer will have his pleasures, then he must forsake the Lord; and if he will not part with his lust, nor have his heart circumcised, nor broken, then he must goe downe whole to hell, as the Prophet said, *Why shall yett utter an opinion, if God be God, forget him*. God will be chiefe in the soule,

Mat. 6. 23.

It is not possible to have heaven and hell together; then it is impossible for a man to looke up to heaven steadfastly with both his eyes downe to the earth, both at one time.

Thirdly, you must of necessity cast off the yoke of corruption, and rebell against that; you must have your first god; pride, and malice, and the like, to be unthroned, before the Lord Christ will set up his scepter, and before he can be welcome to your soules; you must hard your hearts as you would from your first husband, from sinne, and all these abominations which you have loved and hugged in your life; if ever you would have Christ make a match with you, and take possession of your soules, as the Lord saith, *I have made him as a widow, and he is for me, and as a child, and I will be his father*. Then shall he separate from all, and finally forsake for me, and I will cleave unto my selfe and my Father.

Conclusion 3.

Hosea 2. 3.
opened

Lastly, the soule will not part with his corruption and lust, which are his gods, unless he be wearied with them, and finde the gall and bitterness

Conclusion 4.

ness of their evill nature; I say, till then, it is impossible that ever the soule should be separate from that sinne wherein it hath found such contentment; therefore it is of necessity that they be parted; but before the soule feeleth the venom of sinne, it will not part with it, and so be cannot come to receive the Lord Jesus Christ; and hence it is, that the Lord in his infinite wisdomme is thus not only willing to doe for a poore sinner, but to force him to it, for there is such love and liking to sinne, that if you pull away the aduke-rens quaines, and the drunkards pots, you had as good kill them, and they begin to say, It was well with the towne before the minister came there; the reason is, because he would have his sinne.

No w the Lord is pleased to lay a heavy weight upon the soule, and to force the burthen of sinne upon it, that whereas before, the heart did finde much sweetnesse in these base courses; the Lord maketh them as bitter as gall, or wormewood; And then the soule begins to reason thus with it selfe, and saith, Is it such a thing to be drunke, & is it murther to envy my brother? and can I doe such enter into the Kingdome of heavens? when the soule feeleth God taken away, & heaven separated from him, he saith, Is this the pleasing sin that I have loved, and is this the nature of my pride to have God resist me, this lies heavy upon the heart, and at last the soule is resolved to part with his sinne and never to love it more; Good Lord, do what thou wilt with me, only take my soule and save me, and take away my lusts and corrup-

ons:

ons: The heart is content at length that Christ should doe all; and now the match is made, the sight of sinne from the punishment of it will never separate the soule from sinne, nor breake that union that is betweene them.

Isaiah had it in a great measure, and God plucked his sweet morsels from his mouth, and made him confesse his sinnes, and take shame to himselfe; & so God doth with many, and makes them say, I have beene a drunkard and an adulterer, and a desperate opposer of God and his ordinances: But though *Isaiah* loathed the horror & punishment of sinne, yet he had a murderous disposition still, he that had killed Christ went and murdered himselfe too.

Now from these former conclusions I reason thus, If a mans sinnes be his God, and if there cannot be two Gods in one heart, and if those corruptions of the heart must of necessity be cast out, and if the heart will not part with sinne till it be wearied with it, and that is done by godly sorrow, then it is a matter of necessity, that the heart must be pierced; and there must be a separation betweene sinne and the soule, before Christ will marry the soule and rule in it, or else there shall be two Gods in the heart, which cannot be.

The second thing in this answer is this, some may say, oh I never found this worke in me. Now therefore you must know, how ever this worke is wrought in all for the substance of it, yet in a different manner in the most. For the fashion that God useth in framing the heart is different, two

All are not a-
like wounded
for sinne.

man is pricked, the one with a pinne; the other with a speare: two men are hurt, the one with a penknife, the other with a sworde. So the Lord deals kindly and gently with one soule, & roughly with another, and handles it marvelous sharply; and breakes it all to pieces. There is the melting of a thing and the breaking of it with hammer; this I say the rather to checke the imagination that harbours in the heart of some men, otherwise holy and wise, (and yet mistaken in this point) they thinke the Lord never workes grace, but in this extraordinary manner.

It is true, God sometime must use this affrighting of spirit; and when proud spirits come to grapple with the Lord, he will make their sturdy hearts to buckle: And it is true, there must be a cleare sight of sinne and the heart must be wearied with the willesse of sinne, and be content to part with sinne. This is wrought in alle but that it must be in all in this extraordinary fearefull manner as it is in some, the word saith it is not; neither is God bound to any manner, there is a difference among persons: but

As for example, First, if a person be a scandalous liver, and an opposer of God, and his grace; and set himselfe against the Lord Jesus Christ, if he set his mouth against heaven and professe himselfe an enemy to God and to his church.

Secondly, if a man have harboured a filthy heart, and continued long in sinne, & hath been a close adulterer, and continued long in it.

Thirdly, if a man have been confident in his will course.

Lastly,

Lastly, if God purposed to do some great workes by him.

In all these foure cases he layes a heavy blow upon the heart, & commonly the nature of these persons requires it.

First, when any one hath beene an opposer of God and his grace, if the Lord should deale gently with him, other vile wretches would be ready to say, such a man is gone to heaven, though he be thus and thus, yet the Lord dealt lovingly with him: and therefore though I continue in these courses, I shall doe well enough. Nay, (de-lude not thy selfe, for) the Lord will bruisse him, and rend the kall of his heart, and make him seek to a faithfull minister for direction, & to a poore Christian for Counsell, whom before he despi-sed; and the world shall know what it is to op-pose God, and to persecute his children; as he broke *Pauls* heart, and made him say, *I am he that have persecuted the Saints.*

Commonly the Lord will not shew mercy to such as these are, in hugger mugger, but wil make the world see their humiliation, as they have seen their rebellion and opposition.

Thus the Lord deales with the secret theefe & close adulterer; the Lord pluckes away their corruptions, & makes them vomit up their sweet morsels, and then they will say, these are my sins, and this heart of mine is hardened by the conti-nuance in them: And therefore it is that the Lord workes in this manner.

But if the soule be otherwise trained up a-

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mong godly parents, and live under a soule-saving ministry, that saith, you cannot goe to heaven by a civill course, and you cannot have any dispensation for your prophanation of the Sabbath; I say, if a man live under such a ministry & keepe good company, the Lord may reforme this man, and cut him off from his corruptions kindly, and breake his heart secretly in the apprehension of his sinnes, and yet the world never see it.

Acts 16.

In both these we have an example, in *Lydia* and the *Taylor*, *Lydia* was a sinfull woman, and God opened her eyes and melted her heart kindly, & brought her to a taste of his goodnesse here, and glory hereafter. But the *Taylor* was an outrageous, rebellious wretch, for when the *Apostles* were committed to prison he layed them up in stocks and whipped them sore, O saies he, now I have gotten these precise fellows into my hands, I will have my penny-worths of them.

Acts 16. 30.

Now there was much worke to bring this man home; when the *Apostles* were singing *Psalmes* there came an earth-quake which made the *Prison doores* to fly open and the prisoners feters fall off, but yet the *Taylor*s heart would not shake, at last the Lord did shake his heart too, and he came trembling and was ready to lay violent hands upon himselfe, because he thought the prisoners had beene fled; but the *Apostles* cried to him, *Doe thy selfe no harme: for we are all here; with that he fell downe before them and said, Men and bretheren, what shall I doe to be saved?*

I conclude this, naturally all men are locked up under infidelity, now the Lord opens their hearts severally, you know some lockes are new and fresh, and therefore an easie key may open them, but some lockes are old and rusty, and therefore must be broken open by force of hand; so it is with some mens hearts, howsoever sin prevails over the hearts of civill men, and they are full of pride, and the like; and yet their hearts are kept cleare from rusting, by restraining grace; now the Lord will draw that man by the key of his spirit, and kindly withdraw him from his sinne. But if a man have beene an old rusty drunkard, or adulterer, no key can open his heart; alas, it is not a little matter will doe the deed, it is not now and then a gracious promise that will breake his heart: But the Lord must come downe from heaven, and breake open the doore by strong hand, by awaking his conscience, that all the countrey rings of him.

You know all mens hearts are compared to stones; some stones are soft, you may crush them to pieces with your hands; and some are flints which must have many blowes before they will breake, so it is with the heart: while it hath not beene melted and softned by humility, the Lord must breake it open by maine force, and as it is with a tree, some branches are young and smooth without knots, and some are old ones, and full of knots; now if a man come every day and give a little cut at the tender branch, at last it will off easily; but it is no cutting of an old tree with a

Mans heart is
like a stone.

pen-knife, but a man will take an axe, and give many a fore cut, that all the people in the towne may heare it.

All men grow upon the root of sinne, which is Adams rebellion: some are young, and have not growne knotty in a rebellious course; every Sabbath day the Lord gives a cut at him by his counsels, and by his threatnings, and by his promises; at last it falls off kindly, and they are content to part with their sinnes, and to rest upon Christ for mercy. Another man is an old sturdy vile wretch an over-growne adulterer and drunkard, and his heart is blinded in sinne: I tell you, if ever the Lord cut off this man from his base course, hee must come with a mighty hand, and with his book of the Law: God is ever laying at his soule, blow after blow, and so at last hee begins to forsake his wicked courses. What (saith one) is such a man turned? hee was as heavy a persecutor as ever the Sunne saw: his father was an enemy to all goodnesse, and hee was as bad; Like father like sonne: Hath the Lord brought him home? Yes, now hee sends to the faithfull Ministers, and to Gods people for comfort and direction.

The third and last part of the answer is this, That when God workes gently with Christians, they hardly perceive the worke, though wise Christians may approve that which is done; for this is certaine, wheresoever Christ is, there preparation was; if ever man be saved, Christ hath made him see his lost estate.

Sometime the worke is secret, and the soule appre-

apprehends it not because it is so, and though he doe, yet it is an unknowne worke to him, he knowes not what to make of it, he can finde in his heart to hate those and those sinfull courses, yet he cannot see how this was wrought in him: Mans spirit is such that he misjudgeth the worke; but give me a Christian that God doth please to worke upon in this extraordinary manner, and to breake his heart soundly, & to throw him downe to some purpose, though it cost him deare: this man walkes with more care and conscience, and hath more comfort comming to himselfe, and gives more glory to God, whereas the other doth but little good, in his place, and hath little comfort comming to him.

Therefore labour for soundnes in this worke, and then for ever sound: but if once deluded here, then for ever cozened, and everlastingly damned.

The first Use is for instruction. Is it so, that the soule of a man is thus pierced to the quicke, and runne thorow by the wrath of the Almighty? Then let this teach the Saints and people of God, how to carry themselves towards such as God hath thus dealt withall. Are they pierced men? Oh, pittie them: let our soules, and the bowells of commiseration and compassion bee let out towards them, and let us never cease to doe good to them to the very uttermost of our power and strength. And to the performante of this, not onely reason perswades us, but Religion bindes us, and pittie moves us.

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How to carry
our selves to-
wards such as
are wounded
for their finnes.

Deut. 22. 1, 2, 3.

See what the Lord saith by *Moses*, If a man see his neighbours ox or asse fall into distresse by the way the Lord commanded to ease him and succour him, nay to lay all businesse aside, and not to hide himselfe from him.

Thus the Lord commands mercy to the unreasonable creature, that is thus wearied with the weight that he carrieth; hath the Lord care of oxen? As the *Apostle* saith in another case, *It is for our sakes that the Lord requires this duty*: The meaning is this; shall not the heart of thy brother be eased, that is tired thus with the wrath of the Almighty? shall not this poore fainting creature be succoured? are you men or are you beasts in this kinde? If a hogge be but in distresse, it is strange to see how folke come about it; are we devils then that we can see poore creatures burthened with the unconceivable wrath of the Lord, and not pittie them? doe you see these, and not mourne and succour, and pray to heaven for them? See what *Iob* saith, and let him speake in the behalfe of all distressed soules, *O saith hee, that my sorrowes were all weighed they would prove heavier then the sand*. Marke how he cries for succour, oh you my friends have pittie upon me, for the hand of God is heavy upon me, for the hand of God hath touched me: Imagine you saw him sitting upon the dunghill mourning, it is not the hand of a man or an enemy but the heavy hand of God, and therefore all you my friends that see my anguish and my sorrowes have pittie upon me.

Iob. 39. 21. 23.

THESE ARE THE
WORDS OF THE
LORD BY THE
MOUTH OF
MOSES

Those

Those pale faces and blubbered cheekes, and feeble hearts, and hands of theirs; say thus much unto you, have you no regard of a man in misery? have you no pittie saith the *Lamenting Church*? so doth every grieved & humbled soule, their sighes and sorrowes in secret say thus much; oh all you that walke in the streets, have you no remorse of a poore desolate forlorne creature? Had I beene only wounded, or had my nature growne weake, some Physitian might have eased me, had I been poore, some friends might have enriched me, had I beene disgraced, the King might have advanced me to honours, but was there ever sorrow like to my sorrow of soule? It is the God of mercy that shewes himselfe displeased with me, it is the God of all grace and comfort, that hath filled my heart with the venom of his wrath, if there be any pittie or compassion in you lend helpe, and succour such poore distressed soules; if a woman be in travell and her strength faileth her, oh what bitter cries shee puts forth, with that all her neighbours come to helpe her, and when they have done all they can, they pray to heaven for that they cannot doe themselves.

And as it is with a man that is swooning away, they runne for strong cordiall water, and for this man, and that friend, to succour him, and they cry all, help, help, for the Lorde sake, he is cleane gone; this is all well, it is a worke of mercy and pittie.

But men, brethren and fathers you know not the heart breaking sorrows that are in the soules

of these poore creatures, he lies as it were in childbed, and is in the very pangs of conversion, and his heart is even now at a ha, even now to be converted, and loosed from sinne, and to have Christ brought into his soule; O that God would send some amongst you that you might see some experience of it: Oh saith the poore soule, will these and these sinnes never be pardoned? and will this proud heart never be humbled? thus the soule sighes, mournes, and saith, Lord, I see this, and feele the burthen of it, and yet I have not a heart to be humbled for it, nor to be freed from it; Oh whence will it once be? did you but know this it would make your hearts to bleed to heare him, it is not the swooning away of a man in a qualme; No, No, the sword of the Almighty hath pierced through his heart, and he is breathing out his sorrow, as though he were going downe to hell, and he saith, if there be any mercy, any love, any fellowship of the spirit, have mercy upon me a poore creature that am under the burthen of the Almighty; IO pray and pittie these wounds and vexations of spirits, which no man finds nor feeles but he that hath been thus wounded.

It is the signe of a soule wholly denoted to destruction, that hath a desperate disdain against poore wounded creatures; O saith one, I hope you have hearing enough have you not? it may be you will tumble downe into a well or hang your selfe, will you not? Oh fearefull, is it possible these should harbour such a spirit in any man? there

there is not a greater brand of a man denoted to destruction then this; I doe not say onely he is starke naught for the present, but it is a fearefull brand of a man denoted to eternall destruction; if the devill himselfe were upon earth I cannot conceive what he could doe worse.

When the woman was about to be delivered, the Red Dragon was there ready to destroy the child, & see what the Prophet David saith of such, Lord powre out thy wrath upon the heathen that know not thee, and the Kingdomes that have not knowne thy name; let thy wrathfull displeasure take hold of them that adde iniquity unto iniquity, & let them not come into thy righteousness, let them be blotted out of thy booke. Whats the reason of this? why did David make this imprecation, and say; Lord open the gates of hell; that thy wrath may fall upon the soules of such as these are, the text saith, they persecute him whom thou hast smitten: the Lord smites a poore sinner, and thou art ready to persecute him too; the Lord hath wounded him, & wilt thou stabbe him to the heart; Good Lord! adde iniquity to iniquity! The sin is marvelous, and the cure unconceivable.

When Amaleck met Israel and tooke them at advantage, because they were weake and weary, Remember (saith the text) what he did to thee in the way, how he feared not God, and the Lord saith, I remember what Amaleck did to the people of Israel: goe therefore and blot out his name from under heaven, and kill all both young and old. This is a true type of such as are enemies to the poore Saints

Revel 12.4.

Psal 79.24.25.
26.

Deut. 25.17.

Saints of God, that are thus desolate and wounded in their consciences; their being in the wilderness was a type of the Saints conversion; and their comming to Canaan, was a type of the Saints ariving at the heavenly City Jerusalem.

Now canst thou jeeze at the Saints, that are thus wounded? and canst thou wound them further? and pierce him to the heart, and discourage him? The Lord will remember thee in the day of thy death, and as thou hast shewed no mercy, so shalt thou receive no mercy in that day. I have knowne many such opposers of God and his Grace, that have beene forced to lay violent hands vpon themselves, and when the Lord hath gotten some of them upon their sick bed they lye roaring there; and the Lord layes his full wrath vpon them; If there be any such in this congregation, I pray God let them see some sudden veine of his vengeance, that if it be possible they may finde and feele the waight of this trouble of conscience, that they themselves also may finde mercy from the Lord.

The second part of the Vse is this; as we must pittie those thus wounded; so hereby we see the best way to send help to such as are wounded in their hearts, the wound is in the heart, therefore let the salve be applyed to the heart. It is in vaine to tell a poore wounded soule of Hawkes or Hounds, or the like: hee is not wounded in his body, but in his heart: the physicke must be applyed to the part diseased. If the head be sick or sore, you must not apply a salve to the arme; and

if

if the breast be ill, you must not apply a salve to the foot: so it is a vaine thing to offer riches or pleasures, or profits, to a man that is wounded in his conscience for sin; the wound is not there: if the wound were in disquietnesse, then pleasure will cure it; if the wound were in poverty, then riches would cure him; if the wound were in basenes and contempt, then honours would cure him. No, thy heart is wounded, and the conscience is terrified in the apprehension of Gods wrath; And therefore apply the spiritual *Balm of Gilead*, even the blood of Christ: the case is cleare that all the *Crosses* and *Crucifixes*, and *Agnus dei* in the world, & al the popish pardons can doe no good to a wounded Conscience. There is never a popish shaveling under heaven can cure a wounded soule, hee cannot apply that spirituall salve that should comfort him: hee may delude him, and lead him into the commission of sinne, but he cannot minister any true comfort unto him: thus they cure a poore Christian by searing of his conscience, and make him sinne so much the more, and never be troubled for sinne, as if a man should kill a sicke person, and say now he feeles no hurt, so it often fals out that a man feeles no sinne, but yet he is not cured, because his sinne is not removed, and his heart unpacified in the blood of Christ.

Secondly, is it so, that the wound of a sinner is in his heart? then we haue here a matter of complaint that we may iustly take up against the secure generation wherein we live, there is but
little

Use 2.

little saving sorrow, and therefore but little saving grace, if there be no preparation for Christ: there can be no true evidence of grace, nor of Gods love in Christ; if there be no preparation for a building, there can be no building for up. The Lord be mercifull to a world of men that live in the bosome of the Church, if we had a fountaine of teares with *Jeremy* to bewaile this age in this respect, it were worth the while; and if the Lord should send some *Ezekiel* and say to him, goe to such a countrey, or such a shire; and see if there be any that doe moutne for their sinnes, & comfort such: Alas, what would become of a world of persons?

This is a bill of inditement against three sorts of people; it arraignes and condemnes such, as never yet shared in this worke of preparation, & of saving sorrow, and therefore were never in Christ: these swarme in our streets. And first it falls marvelous heavy upō such as take contentment in their base courses, those loose Epicures and boone gallants of our time, that goe staggering in our streets, they are so farre from grieving for their sinnes, that it is their greatest vexation that they cannot commit sinne, and have elbow roome to sinne freely; O what a grieve it is to them to have a minister checke them, and that there is a law to punish them for sinne; & where as sinne should be poyson in their soules to wound them, it becomes as meat to nourish them, *They sleepe not except they have done mischief,* (saith the *Wise man,*) and their sleepe is taken away unlesse they cause

Prov. 4. 16. 17.

Genesis 25.

drinke to full; they take the bread of wickednesse,
and drinke the wine of sinfullnesse. So farre it is from
being payson unto them, and so far are they from
being troubled with sinne, that it is their meat
and pastime to sinne. Just Esau like: What did
he? When he had eate and drunke, he rose up to play,
and this was all he looked after: When he had
passed away his title to heaven, and happinesse,
and esteemed of Christ and heaven no more then
of a messe of pottage; he ate and drunke; his
heart was never touched for what he had done,
he did not smite upon his thigh, as Ephraim did, &
say, What have I done? Have I sold away my birth-
right for nothing? You that know the world, you
know there are many that sit upon the ale-bench,
and sweare, and drinke, and raile against Gods
servants, and are never troubled for it. Nay, the
world is come to this passe, that it is their grea-
test vexation that they are hindered in their sin-
full courses.

It was the guise of the old world: Haman
went home sicke, because he wanted the Cap and
knee from Mordecai: Amnon was sicke of incest,
and Abah was sicke of covetousnesse, and Abi-
tophel was sicke because his counsell was not fol-
lowed. The Lord of heaven knowes, the adul-
terer is sick because he cannot get the heart and
company of his queene; many a man is sicke of
envy, it is rottennesse to his bones; yea many a
mangoeth up and downe sicke of it, and is not
quiet, because he cannot vent his rage against a
faithfull minister that checkes him: You swea-
rers

ers doth not your hearts rise against the King & State, for making a law against that sinne: Doe you not hate the constable and witnesse that come in against you, you account these the greatest plague to you in all the world; I appeale to the hearts of you all, that heare me this day; can you say you are troubled for sin, and yet grieve, because you cannot commit sinne still: Woe woe to your soules that thus delight in sinne. There are many that despight the spirit of grace and sticke not to say, I did sweare such a man out of the house, and I did drinke such a man under the table dead: Read that place of the *Apostle* & there you shall see your doome, and if there be any such in your families, or amongst your neighbours, throw this in their faces, and if they will goe downe to hell, let them goe with paine, *that all they might be damned* (saith the text,) *which beleeved not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousnesse.* God is not partiall, but saith, *that all they might be damned*: it would almost shake a mans heart to thinke of it.

How many notorious vile wretches may say, Good Lord, what will become of our families, & villages? we are all opposers of God & his grace, shall *all be damned*? I dare not say what God will doe to thee, the text saith so. This, me thinks might lie as poyson and rats-bane upon the heart of a sinfull creature: the Lord in mercy looke upō you and make sinne as loathsome and bitter unto you, as ever it hath beene sweet and pleasant. You see how the matter will goe with you: you that
thus

thus jibe and jeast at the Saints, and sport your
selves in sinne, the time may come that it will be
a dry feast as it was with Dives that was drunke
and fared *deliciously every day*, he had a dry feast in
hell, and could not have a *droppe of water to coole*
his tongue. So it will be with you, you must ei-
ther buckle and mourne for sinne, or else burne
forever.

Luke 16.25.

Secondly, It condemns such as are in a faire
straine, such are they that have a slight sense of
sinne, but it never goes downe to the heart, the
skinne is ripped a little, but the kall of their
heart was never broken for their abominations.
Naaman was to wash severen times in *Jordan*, so this
water of godly sorrow is of a healing nature, but
these men doe not rubbe and reince their soules
in it, they only dippe their soules in a little sor-
row, but you must wash it thoroughly and fully,
if ever you desire to have the leprosie of sinne
purged out: Men bathe their sinnes with teares,
but they doe not drown them; they do as parents
doe with their children, they will correct them a
little, and presently cocker them againe, so the
hypocrite useth to trouble his corruptions; and
complaine of them and vexe them a little with
sorrow, but in the meane time cocker them and
dandle them againe. But sinne will not be so kil-
led, and the heart will not be so easily broken,
this kinde of sorrow is too slight and overly.

As it is with a debter, that hath borrowed mo-
ney, he will complaine he had an ill bargaine,
and desires that either he might have the debt
abated,

1. Kings 22.

abated, or the day put off, he puts it off with meer talking; such a generatiō there are of the whining hypocrites, that wil outwardly complain of their corruptions, but keepe the corruptions still; As *Ahab* did, he hated *Micaiah*, and afterwards he fasted and prayed, that he might sinne more freely without suspition: So there is many a cursed hypocrite that lives in a faire course, and yet will cheat and lie, and deale marvelous unjustly, and then he will complaine of his sinne, and confesse, only to bath his sins, but drown his sins & subdue them he will not, and this he doth that he may sinne more freely againe; it is but fasting and praying, &c.

O brethren it is a desperate hypocrisie, that sorrow which God hath appointed as a meanes to purge out sinne, should be a meanes to cover his sinne: will a few wambling teares doe the deed, and breake the heart? is this acceptable sorrow? you your selves are ashamed of this work, and do you thinke God will accept of it? No, no, it is not the rending of the garments, nor the weeping of the eyes, that will doe the deed, but you must breake your hearts: If you only cut off the legs or wings of a fowle, it will live for all that: so you cut off the armes or hands of sinne, but so long as the heart is not wounded, and driven to any amazement for sin, it will live with you here and in hell too.

Oh doe not cozen your owne soules; it is not the teares of the eye, but the blood of the heart that your sinnes must cost, and if you come not to this

this, never thinke that your sorrow is good, and therefore you that finde your selves guilty, lay your hands upon your hearts & say, Good Lord, this is my portion, the Lord knowes I have confessed my sinnes, and yet have taken liberty to sin; but my heart was never burthened with this evil and vilenesse of sinne, and therefore to this day I never had this true sorrow.

There is a third sort of sorrowers which is the worst of all, they are such as heretofore have drunke deepe of this sorrow, and have beene extraordinarily stricken and yet they are grown so much the more hardened in their sinnes, by all these blowes that God hath layed upon them, these are in a desperate condition, even such as God hath made howle in the congregation, yet afterwards fall into the same courses againe, and returne to their old byas, and now they can outface God and his ministers and all; and thinke it a matter of basenesse to be disquieted in heart, as they have beene: such novices and children they were once, that they could not sleepe nor be quieted, but now they care not what all the ministers under heaven say against them; nay, they can flear in our faces, and be drunke and vile, & be never troubled for it, they have gotte the skill of it, This is the most fearfull condition that almost a poore creature can fall into.

Thou accountest it thy glory and credit that thou canst beare all, and art metall of prooffe, and no bullets can pierce thee, thou wast troubled before, but now thou hast shaken it off, This

Esay 6. 7. 8. 9.

If say is thy shame, & will aggrauate thy condemnation, nay, I take it to be one of the forest tokens under heaven, of a gracelesse heart; If thou hast had thy conscience awakened, and hast beene troubled for sin, and now dost fly off, It is a signe of Gods high displeasure towards thee; thou takest the right course, as if God had inuēted a way to destroy thy soule, as you may see in *Esay*, *Goe thy waies*, saith the Lord, *Speake to this people, but they shall not heare; make the heart of this people fat:* as though he had said, there are a company of people in such a place; Goe thy waies to them, open their eyes, and touch their hearts, and awaken their consciences, and when thou hast done, then let their consciences be seared and fatted, and then they will goe the right way to destruction; for if they would awaken, and sorrow kindly, and repent, I must needs save them.

Let these men remember that it is a heavy signe God hath forsaken them; me thinkes this should trouble their soules exceedingly, & force them to cry out, I am the man that haue my heart fatted, and would not be touched and converted.

Now if all be true that I have said, there are but few sorrowers for sinne, therefore few saved; here we see the ground & reason, why many fly off from Godlinesse, and Christianity: This is the cause; their soules were only troubled with a little hellish sorrow, but their hearts were neuer kindly grieved for their finnes. If a mans heart be broken and disioynted a little, it may grow together againe; But if it be quite broken off,

off, it cannot grow together; so the terrour of the Law affrighted his conscience, and a powerfull minister unjointed his soule, and the judgments of God were rending of him; but he was never cut off altogether: and therefore he returned as vile, and as base, if not worse then before, and he growes more firmly to his corruptions.

It is with a mans conversion, as in some mens ditching; they doe not pull up all the trees by the roots, but plash them: so when you come to have your corruptions cut off, you plash them, and do not wound your hearts kindly, and you doe not make your soules feeble the burthen of sinne truly: this wil make a man grow and flourish still, howsoever more cunningly and subtilly. This lopping professor growes more subtle in his wickednesse: the soule that hath beene terrified for his lusts, hee is now growne a plashed adulterer, and Alehouse haunter, hee will be drunke more cunningly and secretly: and so he that hath beene an open opposer of Gods children, will now jibe and jeast at them in a corner, and when he comes amongst his old companions, then hee can vent out all his malice.

This is the reason why all wicked men that were in some good way of preparation of soule, they turne their backs upon Christ, even because they were never cut off kindly from their sinnes, but only unjointed; and that is the reason why they fall to their old corruptions againe. This is the maine cause of all the hypocrisie under heaven: there was never any soule that made pro-

Use 3.

Hosea 7.14.

Mat. 5.

Amos 6.1.

session, and fals againe, but the ground of it is here.

The third use is for exhortation: If every sorrow will not doe it, and if slight sorrow will not doe it, what then remains to be done, then if ever thou wouldest be comforted; and receive mercy from the great God, labour to take the right way, and never be quieted, til you do bring your hearts to a right pitch of sorrow; let it never be said of as it was of you them in *Hosea*, They have not cried unto me with their hearts, when they bowed upon their beds, they assembled themselves for corn & wine, but they rebell against me. Thou hast a little slight sorrow, but oh labour to have thy heart truly touched, that at last it may breake in regard of thy many distempers; the longer seed time, the greater harvest; and so howsoever this sorrow is troublesome now, it will be very comfortable in the end; and though it be tedious to lay all the cursed abominations upon thy heart, yet it will not be harsh when the Lord remembers you in his Kingdome; it will never repent you that you have had your hearts humbled and broken, when the Lord comes to heale you; and it will never repent you that you have wept; when the Lord comes to wipe away all teares from your eyes. Blessed are they that mourne, for they shall be comforted, saith our Saviour, but woe to you that are at ease in sin; there is a time of mourning for sinne; you cannot have ease and quietnesse alwaies, you had better now be wounded then everlastingly tormented. And therefore if you de-

not

& O

fire

fire to see the face of God with comfort, and to have Christ speake for you, and say, come you poore heavy hearted sinners, I will ease you; if ever you desire this, labour to lay load on your hearts with sorrow for your sinnes. Oh what comfort shall a poore broken heart finde in that day! *David saith, A broken and contrite heart (O Lord) thou wilt not despise.*

Psal: 51

When men goe into a farre countrey for merchandize, they will not take rattles and such toies for their money; but such commodities as they may get something by: so when the Lord comes for broken hearts, you must not thinke to put the Lord off with a little painted sorrow: No, no, it is a broken heart that the Lord wil not despise. Would you know what kinde of heart the Lord will accept and never cast off? *It is a broken heart:* tell your friends and neighbours of it, me thinkes you looke as if you would finde acceptance with God, and goe to heaven; oh then get an humble, lowly, broken heart; the Lord regards not all the rivers of oyle in the world; not a hundred thousand fasts; but it is a broken heart that God will blesse and glorifie.

Look as it is with a womans conception, those birthes that are hasty, the children are either still borne, or the woman most commonly dies; so do not thou thinke to fall upon the promise presently. Indeed you cannot fall upon it too soone upon good grounds; but it is impossible, that ever a full soule or a haughty heart should beleeve, thou maiest be deceived, but thou canst not be ingraft-

Psal. 123. 2.

ted into Christ: therefore when God begins to worke, never rest till you come to a full measure of this brokennesse of heart. Oh follow the blow, and labour to make this worke sound and good unto the bottome, and then you shall be sure to receive comfort, as the Prophet David saith, *Our eyes are up unto thee till thou have mercy on us.* Let your consciences be wounded throughly and kindly, & resolve not to heare the cursed counsell of carnall friends, that say, what neede you mourne; O poore fooles, there is not any, even the civillest professor in the Kingdome, but if God did discharge his sinnes to his heart as hee could doe, it were enough to make him goe howling with sorrow to his grave; therefore humble your selves before God and never be at rest, till the Lord shew mercy to your soules, never unburthen your soules before God ease you, and do not breake prison. For if you doe, God will send after you with a witnesse. No, no, When God hath put thee into prison, breake not out, till God send to deliver you; and then your heart will be filled with comfort: soundly humbled, soundly comforted: If a man be lost, Christ will seek him up and save him.

Quest.

Now it may be some poore soule will say, How shall I bring my heart to this sound worke indeed.

Answ.

For answer to this, I will shew three meanes whereby the Lord workes this sound conviction,

First, when the Lord begins first to worke up-

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on you, and you begin to see your corruptions, then possesse your soules with the apprehension of the ticklishnesse of your condition wherein you are: this worke is great and marvelous inward, and you may be easily deceived, and the danger is great if you be deceived: it is in this case with the soule, as it is with a ship on the sea, when the marriners passe by and see the rockes where such and such ships have bene split; and the men and all lost; they are very wary to steere aright and to direct their compasse aright; but neare sands and rockes they will not come: So it is with this humbling of the heart, many have bene cozened and deceived therein: therefore now hold this rule, Let that soule whose eyes God hath opened, and brought under his blowes (let such I say) rather feare he is not sound in the worke, then feare that he shall not have ease; for every man saith, I pray you (Sir) comfort and refresh me, and will God never give me comfort? Oh now you goe wrong; many perish because they goe off from this worke so soone; but never did any perish because he received the worke soundly. Therefore reason thus with thy owne heart; and say, Good Lord be merciful to me, my condition is very tickle; If now I be deceived, the farewell comfort.

Was not *Cain* and *Judas* vexed and disquieted and yet damned?

This is a great point of wisdom, and sinks many a Christian, (I know what I say,) as it is with child bearing, a woman when her throwes

come often and strong, there is some hope of deliverance, but when her throwes goe away, commonly the child dies, and her life too. So it is in this great work of contrition, which is nothing else, but the child-birth of the soule; when your throwes goe away, take heed that your salvation goes not too; once you could say, the minister spake home to my heart, I remember the time full well; Why then what becomes of all your sorrow? You can be as carnal & as secure as ever? it is certaine you are in child-bearing, but your throwes have left you, and your brokennesse of heart is gone, and therefore you are in an ill case, surely at some low ebbe of grace.

Againe, if a mans heart be soundly broken, though he fall into some sinne, he may be recalled; but if he have not his heart soundly broken, he is undone. If the foundation be naught, the building must needs fall; So it is in this preparation of the soule for Christ, if this be naught, all comes to naught; therefore be so much the more fearefull of your soules, because your condition is so much the more tickle in this, then in any thing else, and rather desire soundnesse then quietnesse.

Secondly, when God stirres, doe you stirre your hearts too, be you stabbed further, & make the blow goe deeper, therefore wheresoever any truth goeth neere thy heart, and awakens thee, looke up to heaven, and blesse God for it, and labour to drive the naile home to the head, and make the salve sinke into the bottome; And let me advise you to this, when your soules are wrought

wrought upon by any reproofes or admonitions, take that truth, and labour to maintaine the power of it upon your hearts all the weeke after, and let your soules be awed by it.

Thirdly, consider what thy soule findes to be most evill and detestable, whether it be poverty or disgrace, or losse of liberty; and then (marke what I say) get up thy heart higher in the very apprehension of sinne as it is sinne: and let thy soule be more affected with the vilenesse of sin, then of any other hardship whatsoever. As thus, suppose thy heart be vere proud, if shame and disgrace befall thee, oh how doth this heart shake in the apprehension of it, he can live no longer, except some honour come: Now sinne is worse then shame, therefore look up to heaven, & say, oh my heart did shake with shame, but sinne is farre worse, for, what if the Lord take away my honour, that he hath promised to such as feare his name: and what if he blot my name out of the booke of life, therefore sinne is worst of all, this is certaine, there is no evill the soule feares or finds, but sinne is the cause of it, but the separation of the soule from the Lord is the greatest evil, and sinne is the cause of it, and therefore rest not till thy soule shake in the apprehension of it. This is the next way to be above punishment or any thing else.

Now I come to the fruits of godly sorrow, which are from these words, *They said to Peter & the other Apostles, Men and brethren what shall wee do?* In these words there are three things presumed;

sumed; and three things plainly expressed.

1. First, there are three things presumed; they did see themselves in a miserable and damnable condition, as if they had said, hell is now gaping, it is but turning of the ladder, and we goe to hell for ever; *Men and brethren, what shall we doe?*

2. Secondly, they themselves were ignorant, and could not direct themselves what to doe to come out of this estate, and therefore they said, *Men and brethren, advise vs what to doe: if there be any help, yee know it.*

3. Yes still there is a secret kinde of hope, and the heart suspects, that it may and will be otherwise with them, they doe not say, there is nothing to bee done; no, they say, *What shall we doe?* surely there is some way to finde helpe, if wee could tell it.

Againe, there are three things plainly expressed in these words, they make an open and plaine confession of their sinnes; when they were sicke at the heart, they could make open confession, and lay the hand upon the fore; and say, If there be any vile wretches under heaven, we are they.

2. Secondly, a thorough resolution against their sinnes; and hatred of the same, as if they had said, *We are resolved to doe any thing, whatsoever it is, we care not, so we may thwart our sinnes.*

3. The last thing expressed is a 'sequestration of the soule from this sinne, the soule fallest off from them; and bids farewell to all cursed courses.

First, I come to the three things presumed; and

and because I shall have occasion afterward to handle the two former, Therefore now I come to the last of the three, which is this, *Men and brethren, What shall we doe?* Surely there is some course to bee taken. Is there not? you that are *Gods Prophets* tell vs, if there be any hope for such poore distressed sinners as we are.

So the Doctrine is this, there is a secret hope of mercy, wherewith God supports the hearts of those that are truly broken hearted for their sinnes; howsoever these men did see themselves miserable, yet they did not throw off all, & say, *Men and brethren* there is no hope for vs, therefore we will heare no more; but, seeing we must go to hell, we wil take our pleasure while we live here in the world, while we may, and if we must bee damned we will be damned for some thing; No, these people had some hope that they should finde mercy, the Lord bruised the heart, but he did not breake it; the Lord will not quench the smoking flaxe, but kindles it further, and the Lord drawes on the worke of the soule and pluckes it to himselfe, and makes it looke vp to him and waite vpon him for helpe and mercy.

I confesse, it is true, that sometimes the soule in some desperate fit, and in some horrour of heart, when temptation growes violent & long, and the distempers of a mans heart stir exceedingly, then a man may seeme to cast off all, and resolve with *David* when he had beene long persecuted by *Saul*, *I shall one day fall by the hand of Saul;* So the soule sayth, God will one day leaue me, and

Doctrine.

Psal. 77. 6. II.

and I shall perish; And as *David* sayth in another place, *All men are lyers*, that is, they sayd I shall be King of Israel, but they are all deceived; *They all lyers*; but it was in his haste, in a proud, impatient, haughty humour of soule.

Jonah. 3. 4.

This is our nature, if God buckle not to our bow, and heare us not even when wee will; then (in a proud humor) wee are apt to say, oh my sins will never be pardoned, and I shall never get ground against my corruptions; a man that is in a swoone, lies as if he were dead, but yet he comes to himselfe againe, and lookes up and speaks; So how ever the soule in some unruly humor is driven to a swoone, and thinkes it impossible to finde mercy, or overcome his corruption; yet still he recovers againe, and the soule that is truly broken for sinne, is upheld; as *Jonas* said, *I am cast out of thy presēce, I am evē sinking, yet will I looke towards thy holy temple*; So howsoever the soule may be over-whelmed in a drunken fit of pride, or impatience, yet afres the soule hath prayed, it saith, I will wait upon God for mercy.

God deales with poore sinners in this case, as men doe that pound pretious powder, as *Bezar* stone or the like, to make some potion withall, they will breake it, and pound it all to pieces, yet they cover it up close, and will not loose the least sand of it, as they breake it, so they keepe it close that none be lost: So when God doth purpose to doe good to your soules, he will breake you, and melt you, and then you thinke he hath cast

cast you off in his anger; No, no, he is pounding of you, but he will preserve those soules notwithstanding, and will not lose such poore sinners whom he purposeth to doe good unto.

As it is with pocket dyals, a man may shake them this way and that way, but they are still northward by vertue of the loadstone; so there are many shakings in the soule, sometime it feareth God will not be mercifull, he sometimes hopes that he will; thus it is tossed to and fro, but still it is heaven-ward, & there is a hope that it may be otherwise: For the Lord holds the soule by a secret vertue to himselfe, and drawes the heart to seeke for merer.

The soule hath many shakings.

When the *Prodigall* child was brought to a desperate strait, he beganne to consider what he had done, whereas before he said; shall I ever be a slave in my fathers familie? but at last when all was spent, what doth he doe? he saith, It is true, I can looke for no help and favour, and I cannot tell whether my Father will receive me or no, yet my Fathers servants have bread enough, and I shall starve for hunger; O wretch that I am, I have left a kinde fathers house; yet, come what will, I will home to my father, and say, Father, I have sinned; Thus the soule thinkes with it selfe, Oh the many sweet and gracious calls that I have had I how often hath Christ come home to my heart, and desired entrance? and yet I shut the doore upon him: shall I now goe home to the Lord Jesus Christ? How justly may he reject me that have rejected him? he may damne me, and yet he may

Luke 15.18.

may save me, & therefore I will wait upon him for mercy: thus the soule will not off from God, but it hath a secret hope wherewith the Lord keepes the heart to himselfe.

Reason 2.

The first reason is, because unlesse the Lord should leave this hope in the heart, it would utterly be overthrowne with despaire: You that make nothing of your loose thoughts, and vaine speeches, I tell you, if God did set but one finfull thought upon thy heart, thy soule would sinke under it, & the Lords wrath would drive thee to marvelous desperation: were it not that the Lord doth uphold thee with one hand, as he beats thee downe with the other, (I say) it were impossible but the soule should despaire, (as the proverb is,) But for hope the heart would breake, Who can stand under the Almighty hand of God, unlesse he doth uphold him: God hath broken off the sinner by this sorrow, but he will not throw him to hell: As the gardiner cuts off a graft to plant it into a new stocke, not to burne it: So the Lord cuts off a sinner from all abomination, but he will not cast him into hell, and the Lord melts the heart of a poore sinner, but consumes him not, but as the goldsmith melts his gold, not to consume it all away, but to make it a better vessel: So the Lord melts a poore sinner to make him a vessel of glory: the Lord will fire those proud hearts of yours, and clip off those knotty lusts, but if you belong to him, he will leave a little remainder of hope, that you shall be formed and fashioned, not consumed.

It

Esa. 37. 36.

It is the argument of the Lord by the Prophet, *He will come and dwell with, and refresh the broken soule, and he will not contend for ever, lest the Spirit should faile before him*: If the Lord should let in but one scattering shot of his vengeance into the heart, it were enough to drive the soule to despaire, but God will lay no more upon us then will doe good to us.

Secondly, if the Lord did not leave this hope in the heart, a mans indeavours in the use of the meanes would be altogether killed: if there be no hope of good, then there is no care of using the meanes, whereby any good may be obtained. Good is the loadstone of all our endeavors, a man will not labour for nothing: therefore despaire kills a mans labours, and pluckes up the root of all his indeavours. If there be any good present, hope makes us labour to encrease it, if any good be to come, hope labours to attaine it: But good there must be.

Reason.

So hope provokes the soule to use the meanes and to say, I am a damned man, but if there be any hope I will pray, and heare, and fast; who knowes but God may shew mercy to my poore soule?

Now gather up all: if without this secret hope the heart would faile, and if without it a mans indeavours would be utterly crushed and come to nothing, then it is no wonder that the Lord in his infinite mercy and wisdom, when he will doe good to the soule, leaveth some secret hope of mercy.

First,

Pse 1.

First, we may here take notice of the marvelous tenderness, and the loving nature of God in dealing with poore sinners; that in al his courses of justice remembers some mercy; and in all the portion of his wrath still he drops in some cordials of comfort: he deales not with us as he might; but so, as might be most comfortable every way, and usefull to worke upon our hearts, & to draw our soules home unto himself. Should the Lord come out against a poore sinner, and in his wrath let fly against him, his soule would sinke downe under him; but blessed be God, that he doth not deale with our hearts as we deserve; if he were as rigorous against us, as we have beene rebellious against him, we should sinke in sorrow and fall into despaire never to be recovered any more.

Act 9.

But as the Lord batters us, so he releeves us; as we may see in *Saul*, he had gotten letters to *Damascus*, and now he hoped, being generall of the field, to bind and to imprison all, and he would not spare the poore Christians a jot; but Christ meets him in the field, & threw him downe, and might have killed him too: but the Lord desired rather that he might be humbled then confounded: I cannot read that ever he shewed his letters, but layed all flat downe before the Lord, and so was accepted; the Lord shewed him his misery, yet he lets him not perish there, but gives him a little crevise of comfort.

When the Lord dealt with the children of Israel, he said, *I will allure her and bring her into the wilder-*

wildernesse, and there I will give her the valley of Achor for the doore of hope; When Achan was stoned for stealing the wedge of gold, the Israelites called it the valley of Achor, and so it is called to this day.

The valley of Achor is the valley of trouble, of stoning, or consternation, so the Lord doth here, he draweth the soule into the wildernesse of sorrow for sinne, but doth he leave the soule there? no, there is the doore of hope also, and there the soule shall sing as in former times. And hereupon the soule saith, there is some hope that God will do good unto me for all this; there is hope the Lord is melting me, to make me a vessell of glory: that's a gloomy night when there is neither moone nor candle to be seen: so though the soule be marvellous gloomy and heavy, yet there is some crevise of light and consolation let into the heart, still chearing and refreshing it: the Lord knowes what metall we are made of, and remembers that we are but dust, therefore he so corrects us, that he may leave an inkling of mercy and favour in our hearts.

O therefore let us admire and blesse this good God, and not quarrell with his ministers nor providence, and say, other men have comfort, and therefore why am I so troubled and disquieted? how now? It is endlesse mercy that thou livest, therefore downe with thy proud heart, and stifle those distempers of Spirit, and say, The Lord hath broken and wounded me, but blessed be his name, that I may come to Church, and that he hath not dealt with me as I have deserved

Holsa 215.

Ios. 7. 24.

Psal. 103.

but in goodnesse and mercy; I hope God in his season will doe good to my soule.

Secondly, let us be wise to nourish this same blessed worke in our hearts for ever; let us have our hearts more and more strengthened, because thereby our hearts will be more & more inabled to beare and undergoe any thing; if you have but a little glimpse of hope, cover it, and labour to maintaine it, and if ever God let in any glimpse of mercy into your hearts, let it not goe out; it is ever good to take that way that God takes; the Lord sustaines our hearts with hope, hope is the finewes of the soule, therefore strengthen it.

As a marriner that is tost with a tempest in a darke night, when he sees no starres, he casts anchor, and that cheares him; this hope is the anchor of the soule, whereby it lookes out and expects mercy from God; the poore soule seeth no light nor comfort, nothing but the wrath of an angry God; and he saith, God is a just God; and a jealous God, even that God whose wrath I have opposed, is displeased with me, then the soule is tossed and troubled; and runnes upon the rocks of despaire; how shall the soule be supported in this condition? you will finde this true one day, therefore looke to it before: you vile drunkards are now sayling in a faire gale of pleasure, and carnall delight, but when the Lords wrath shall leaze upb you, when he shall let in the flashes of hel fire, then you are tossed, sometimes up to heaven, now downe to hell; therefore cast anchor now, and this hope will uphold you, for this hope is not

led the anchor of the soule. Thou dost not yet see the Lord refreshing of thee, but it may be otherwise. The people of Ninivie said, *Who knows but God may repent*, this upheld their hearts, and made them seek to the Lord in the use of the meanes, and the Lord had mercy on them. If you belong unto the Lord, he will come against those drunken proud hearts, and rebellious hearts of yours, and dragge them downe to hell, and make them sorrow for their sinnes. And remember this against that day, *Who knows but the Lord may shew mercy?* and therefore yet heare, and pray, and fast, and seek unto him for mercy. We fence those parts of our bodies most that are most precious, and the hurt whereof is most dangerous. Hope is called the *helmet of salvation*, and the assurance of Gods love is the head of a Christian; now take away a Christians head, and he is cleane gone; the devil ever labour for this, and saith, You come to heaven? prove it: Lo, you thinke God hath need of drunkards and adulterers in heaven; and will God provide a crowne of glory for his professed enemies? Hath God made heaven a bawling-house for such unclean wretches as you are? No, no, there is no such expectation of mercy: this wounds the head of the soule, but hope is the *helmet* that covers the head of a Christian, makes him say, I confesse I am as bad as any man can say of me: heaven is a holy place, and and I have no goodnesse at all in me, yet there is hope the Lord may breake this proud heart of mine, and take away these distempers of Spirit:

Jonah 3.9

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 God seems to
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Ans.

Meanes how to
maintaine our
hope, when
God seemes to
walke contrary
to us.

1.

Mat. 11. 24.

Rom. 4. 18. 21.

Now by this meanes the head of a Christian is kept sure.

But some will say, how shall we maintaine this hope in our hearts, and by what meanes may we feed this hope?

The meanes are especially three. First, take notice of the *Al-sufficiency* of God, as he hath revealed himselfe in his word; say not as many do, I cannot conceive it, or I cannot finde it, but what doth the word say? Is not God able to pardon thy finnes? (away then with those, I cannot conceive it, and the like.) Is there any thing hard for me, saith God? Whatsoever thy estate is, there is nothing hard to him that hath hardnesse at command; when our Saviour said, *It is as easie for a camell to goe through the eye of a needle, as for a rich man to goe into heaven?* Good Lord, said they, *Who can be saved?* But Christ said, *with God all things are possible.* if you looke unto man how he is glued to the world; so that all the ministers under heaven cannot pull him away, but still he will lie, and cozen: Reason and Judgement cannot conceive how this man should be saved, but with God all things are possible: See what the *Apostle* saith; *Abraham above hope beleev'd under hope, that he should be the Father of many nations;* this he did, because he knew he which had promised was able to performe it; and this did feed his hope, he did beleove above hope in regard of the creature, under hope in regard of God. As if he had said, I have a dead body, but God is a living God; and *Sarah* hath a barren wombe,

but

but God is a fruitfull God.

It may be thou sayest, if any exhortatiō would have wrought upon me, then my heart might have beene brought to a better passe; but can this stubborne heart of mine be made to yeild? And can these strong corruptions of mine be subdued?

Object.

Howsoever thou canst not doe it, yet God can quicken thee, and although thou art a damned man, yet he is a mercifull God, this all-sufficiency of God is a hooke, whereon our soules hang; when the *Apostles* had prayed that the minds of the *Ephesians* might be opened, and that they might be able to know the love of Christ; because some one might say, how shall we know that which is above knowledge, the text saith, *Now to him that is able to doe abundantly above all that we can thinke or aske, according to his mighty power that worketh in us, to him be glory: As though he had said, though you cannot thinke or aske as you should, yet God is able to doe exceeding abundantly more then we can thinke or aske, so then no more but this, we are not able of our selves to thinke a good thought, yet there is sufficient power in God, and though we are dead hearted and damned wretches, yet there is sufficient salvation in God. Let us hang the handle of hope on this hooke.*

Answer.

Ephes. 3. 20. 21.

Secondly, the freeness of Gods promise marvelously lifts up the head above water; as the beggar saith, The doale is free, why may not I get it as well as another. This sometimes dasheth

Meanes 21

our hopes : when the soule begins to thinke what mercy is offered, he saith,

Object.

Oh! many are they that have it; could I feare God as I should, and seeke for mercy as I ought, then there were some hope, but I have no heart to endeavour or desire after any mercy, and I cannot bring my soule, nor submit my will to yeild, and therefore shall I ever have any mercy?

Ans.

Why not thou too? Doth God sell his mercy? No, he gives it freely, God keepes open house: Oh the freeness of that mercy and goodness that is in God! he requires nothing of thee to procure it, but he shewes mercy because he will shew mercy; thou hast no will, but God hath a will: and his shewing of mercy depends not on thy wil, but upon his owne freewil: It is true, God will make a man will and break his heart, because no man otherwise can be saved, but it is as true, that Christ will give you brokennesse of heart as well as heaven and salvation. *I will take away the heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh, and cause you to walk in my wayes,* saith the Lord: hold this truth in thy soule: As there is no worth in the soule that can deserve any thing at Gods hands: so there is no sinne (the sinne against the holy Ghost only excepted) that can hinder the freenes of Gods grace from saving of us: if thou belong to him, he will hale thee to heaven and pull thee from hell, he will make thee lie in the dust, and wait for mercy, & come groveling for his grace, and that freely, without any thing on thy part: *who is a God like to thee (saith Micah) who pardonest iniquity,*

Ezech. 36.26.

saith Micah

iniquity,

iniquity, because mercy doth please thee?

Mich. 7. 18.

The Lord sheweth mercy, not because thou canst please him, but because mercy pleaseth him. And in *Esay* he saith, *I am he that blottereth out thy offences, for my owne names sake.*

Esay 43. 24. 35.

But the soule may say, they were Gods people that did humble themselves, and they had hearts to feare him.

Obj. II.

See that in the twentieth fourth verse, *Thou hast brought me no corne, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifice: but thou hast wearied me with thy transgressions,* yet the Lord saith, *I am he that pardoneth thy sinnes:* Thou saiest, if thou couldest pray, and humble thy selfe, there were hope of mercy; the text doth not say, *It is a sinner,* but it is I, a God, that must doe it, this is the freenes of his grace.

Ans.

But some may object, Is it possible that a man should receive any mercy, & yet be so stubborne and rebellious? This makes way for drunkards to live as they list, and yet thinke to goe to heaven.

Obj. III.

Answer, It is true, the Lord will pardon thee if they belong to him, but he will doe it with a witnesse: the Lord will dowze that soule of thine in the veine of his vengeance, but he will pardon thee too: God will pardon thy sinne in Christ, but he will make thee feele the bitterness of sinne.

Ans.

Lastly, consider the abundance of mercy and goodnesse that is in God, whereby he not only strives with us in the midst of all rebellions, but

Means. 3.

he is more mercifull then we are or can be rebellious; this helpe the heart of another thing that cuts it. For when the soule seeth all his finnes for number, for nature, so many, and so abominable, he saith,

Objct.

Can mercy be shewed to such a wretch as I am?

Ans.

Yes, for as God is al-sufficient, and his promise free, so he hath plenty of mercy for the worst, he exceeds in mercy all the finnes that can be; (except that against the holy Ghost) and therefore the soule throwes it selfe upon this, the *Apostle* saith, *Where sinne abounds, grace abounds much more:* lest any man should say, *Let us sinne that grace may abound,* the text saith in another place, *whose damnation is just.* This knockes off fingers, though a sinfull wretch abuse God and Grace; yet mercy will overcome the heart in this case, but it will cost him deare, though thou turnest the grace of God into wantonnesse, the Lord will turne that wantonnesse of thine into bitternesse; the Lord will sting that heart of thine one day, and make thee see whether it be good to forsake mercy when it is offered; it will be easier for *Sodomites* then for thee, when thou shalt see a company of poore *Sodomites* frie in hell; howsoever God may bring thee to heaven, yet he will make thee frie in hell, and he will make thee thinke a *Sodomite* to be in a better condition for the present then thou art.

Rom. 4. 20.

Objct.

But some will say, God cannot in justice save such a wretch as I am.

For

For answer to this, see what Saint James saith, *Mercy rejoiceth, or triumpheth, over Justice*: howsoever *Justice* saith, he must be plagued; yet *Mercy* saith, Christ hath made a plentiful satisfaction for him, then mercy triumpheth over judgement: so then if God be al-sufficient; and his promise free, and his mercy superabundant; then we may be stirred up to hope for mercy from God; our hearts may be supported herein for ever.

Now I come to some other particulars that are plainly exprest in our text.

First, they made a free and open confession of their finnes, they did not stay till the *Apostle* went to their houses, but they went to him, and said, *Men and brethren*, you have spoken against the sinne of murder, and we confesse we are guilty of this sinne; they saw their finnes and confessed them openly before the *Apostles*.

The Doctrine which ariseth from hence is this. When the heart is truly broken for sinne, it will be content to make open & free confession thereof, when a man is called thereunto: or thus, sound contrition brings forth bottome confession. *Men and brethren*, What shall we doe to be saved? as if they had said the truth is, we have heard of the feareful condition of such as have killed the Lord Jesus, and we confesse whatsoever you have said he was persecuted by us, and blasphemed by us, we are they that cryed Crucifie him, crucifie him, we would have eaten his flesh, and made dlice of his bones; we plotted his death and gloried in it, these are our finnes, and haply a thousand more that

Doctrine

that then they revealed; and this is remarkable, They goe to Peter and the other Apostles, they did not goe to the Scribes and Pharisees, and that cursed crew.

Not.

Whence observe this by the way, when the soule is thus truly broken, generally it will never repaire to such as are carnall and wicked men: for these people knew that the Scribes and Pharisees had their hands as deeply imbrued in Christs blood as themselves, and besides they knew them to be such naughty packes, that they would rather incourage them in their sinnes, then any way ease them and recover them from the same: therefore they went to the Disciples, because they were holy and gracious persons, and willing to succour them; and it is certaine, that soule was never truly broken for sinne, that goes for helpe to such as are guilty of the same; it is suspicious that these men goe only to stoppe the mouth of conscience, but never to have conscience awakened. You see our converts here went to the Apostles, not to the Scribes and fellow-murtherers; but this by the way only: I goe on in the former point.

A broken hearted sinner knowes more by himselfe then any man can doe, when a man is pinched with famine or drought, he will open his wants fully and freely, and so a man that is sicke and hath some heavy disease upon him, will tell of more paines and gripings then any Physitian can doe: So it is with the soule that is deadly sicke in the sight of his sinnes and abominations.

Quest.

But now a question will grow from hence;

May

May not a wicked man that never was truly broken-hearted make a large and open confession of his sinnes?

I confesse that in the horroir of conscience he may doe it, with the *dogge* returning to his vomit; and with the *Sow* to her wallowing in the mire; now the hogge that is kept in a cleane meadow, will looke somewhat white, but if he comes from thence, he will lie downe in the first dirty puddle he comes at; so there are some sinners that have beene well trained up, and live in a good familie, they are a little cleansed; but when they come to live among wicked cōpanions, they grow as prophane as the rest; and yet all this while they are hogges, and will murmur at others that are more holy then themselves; Now the dogge is he that hath had his eyes opened; and his conscience awakened, and some horroir laid upon his soule, and this doth make him disgorge himselfe for a while, to ease him of his horroir; but when that man returnes to his sinnes, he will snarle and bite too, and fall heavily upon Gods people, so much the more because he hath confest his sinnes, thus it was with *Judas*, he swallowed downe his *repentance*, but God made him come and acknowledge his sinne, and take shame to himselfe, and yet a *Judas*, a devil, & at this day in hell: I tell you, this his confession out-bids most people in our generation, the fish is content to nibble at the bait, and so is taken with the hooke, and when it hath the hooke and bait too, it would be ridde of both: so when horroir of conscience hath fastened up-

on

on the soule of a man because of sinne, he could be content to vomit his sinne and all up, and yet he is a very beast.

Quest.

Againe, this question may arise here, doth confession argue true contrition?

Ans.

I answer, there is a kinde of confession which no man attaines unto, but he hath a broken heart; *Judas* nor no carnall heart under heaven comes to this, and you must know, there is no word spoken by the one but may be spoken by the other, and therefore the difference is not frō the words, but from the inward frame of the heart, and for the opening of this truth I will propound and shew these two things.

First, the confession of a poore broken hearted sinner.

Secondly, I will shew you when the Saints of God are called to confesse.

Difference be-
twixt true and
false confession
of sinnes.

For the first, the difference betweene the true and the false confessio is discovered in these three particulars.

1.

First, they differ in the end, a broken hearted sinner confesseth his sins that he may take shame to himselfe, and glorifie God; this is the frame of the soule that truly confesseth his sins, he doth it to honour the *Gospel* which he hath so much dishonoured, to discover the vilenesse of his person and of his sinne, that he hath so much set up; he is willingly content that the glory of it may be Gods, and the shame his owne. Consider that passage of the good *Thiefe* upon the *Crosse*, when the reprobate was going to be executed for his

Luke 23. 40.

sinne

sinne, he railed upon Christ, (whence observe this by the way, a wicked man will be a wretch though he should goe to hell presently;) now when he was railing, see what the *Good thiefe* replies, *Fearst thou not God? we have sinned and are justly punished for our sinnes*, to die and goe to hell too, if God be not the more mercifull; this man, you see, was content to fall out with himselfe, and his sinnes, and to honour the justice and holinesse of God in condemning of him.

So in *Ezekiel*, the text saith, *They shall remember their waies that were not good, and shall be ashamed*, that is, they shall take shame to themselves, they shall not shrink for the same; a gracious heart cannot tell what to doe to make sinne and it selfe base enough before God; that his soule and sin may fall out one with another. As in the example of *Zachaeus*, whereas the confession of a carnall hypocrite comes not so currantly off, it sticketh in his teeth, he begins to confesse something, and then he stands; he saith something, and calls it backe againe, and is loath to take any shame for the evill committed; and therefore haply he will come when he is called, and goe away and confesse nothing at all; Nay, if a minister heare any thing of him, he will hide it and tell a flat lie, rather then take shame to himselfe for it, it is true, a carnall hypocrite may confesse sometimes to give the minister content, as commonly such doe, he may confesse to get inward with a man; and to get commendations, nay, he may confesse, to sinne more freely without suspicion; for charitie beleeves

Nath.

Ezek. 16. 16.

Luke 19. 18.

believes this, that when a man hath confessed his sinne, he will never sinne in that kinde againe, nay sometimes he doth it to stop the mouth of conscience, and therefore when conscience is full of horror, to quiet conscience and to still the clamor thereof, he is content to reveale his sinne, that so he may have some secret peace for his sinne: thus far they differ in their ends.

Secondly, they differ in their grounds: the cause and ground of a broken hearted sinner, it is from the loathsomnesse and vilenesse that the heart seeth in sinne, and therefore it confesseth to free it selfe from that sin, and to let out all those abominations that are so loathsome and tedious to him; as the sinner that is truly burthened is to confesse all his finnes, so especially those that are most loathsome and secret, even those sins whereby the heart hath bin most estranged from God: for as before the soule did confesse sinne freely, because he was content to take shame to himselfe, so now he doth it to ridde himselfe of the same. Then a man feesles sinne kindly, when it goeth to the very inwards of the soule: it is in this case with a broken hearted sinner, as it is with that part of a mans body that is impostumed, or the like; when the impostume is ripe, if it be lanced to the quicke, the very coare and all comes out, but if it be pricked with a pinne, there may some corrupt matter come out, but the coare remaines yet in it still: so it is with an impostumed heart, when a man is truly pierced with his abominations, he is content to lay open the most inward corruptions

one of all, that there may be a perfect killing of
all; nay, it labours to sweep out the most secret
sinner of all, without any ifs, or ands, and he saith;
Oh this proud, wretched, adulterous heart of
mine, hath bin my hane, & it will be my destruction
o for ever, if God be not more merciful, now the
coare and all comes out; whereas the hypocrite
that feelles only the feare, and horror, and punish-
ment of sinne, executed or threatened, he confes-
seth no more then may procure his ease, he de-
sires not so much to have his corruptions remo-
ved, as to be freed from horror; And therefore
a hypocrite will scumme over all his confessions,
his talke will be a hundred miles from his sinnes,
he never comes to that maine sinne which keeps
his heart from God; and it is remarkable, one
man complains he is troubled with wandring
thoughts in hearing the word, and his soule is tak-
en aside with strange distempers, but follow that
soul home, and you shall commonly finde some
base corruptions that take up his heart; and ano-
ther man complains of his hard heart; it stirres
not at the word of God, and Gods Judgements
doe not melt him, when yet in the meane time he
nourisheth the pride, and selfe uncleannesse, that
is the cause thereof; and there are many besides
these; as it is with a dogge, he doth not gorge up
his meat because he loathes it, but because his
stomacke is croubled with it, and therefore when
his paine is over, he takes it with greedinesse a-
gaine; so it is with an hypocrite, his heart is bur-
thened with extreme sorrow, and therefore he
(throwes

The hollow
hearted confes-
sions of hypo-
crites.

throwes out so much as did trouble and gale his conscience, and may worke him some ease; but afterwards he returnes to it againe; and this is the cause why we have so many revolters, and backsliders, after such open confessions; they confesse only to ease themselves of the horror, and therefore when the horror is gone, they fall to their old sinne againe, whereas a sound Christian doth confesse his sinne, onely from the loathsomnesse of it.

Thirdly, the soule that is truly broken, makes confession with an inward resolution never to meddle with sinne any more; yet all this while the soule is full of feare and suspicion, for feare of falling into those sinnes againe, therefore it desires rather to discover it selfe by desires and wishes; then any confidence in it selfe; and therefore the soule saith, O that the Lord would once give me power against these corruptions, oh how happy should I be, but alas I have no power of my selfe; the soule is willing to fling it selfe into the armes of Gods mercy, and to commit himselfe wholly to the meanes of grace, that God may get himselfe honour by him; only he desires him to be good unto him by giving of him power against his corruptions.

Whereas the hypocrite that is in feare of some judgements, and the wrath of God hath seized upon his soule; that he may get ease, will promise any thing, and be marvelous open, and yet confident in himselfe, and say, if God would give me health, and raise me up againe, all the world

shall see I will be a new man, and they shall see how holy, and how carefull, and how exact I will be: yet, poore soule, when he is out of his trouble, he returnes to his vomit, & is worse then before, and so much the worse, because he hath made an open confession. As it is with a debtor, an honest man comes freely, & doth acknowledge his debt, and desires the creditor to satisfie himselfe with his body and goods, he desires he may be no loser by him; hee suspects hee shall not be able to pay him, but he hopes, so farre as hee is able, to give him content: but another cunning mate promi- seth to pay all, if he will give him further day, but intends no such matter. Just so it is with a soule that is truly broken for sinne, he layes himselfe in Gods presence, and referres himselfe into Gods hands, and saith, The truth is, Lord, I know, this proud corrupt heart of mine will not yeeld, it will deceive me: I am afraid I shal not be able to walk holily: take this heart of mine, and doe what thou wilt with it, only purge out my sinne and corrup- tion: this is the manner of his confession.

But some man may say, Is every man bound, thus freely and openly to confesse his sinnes? I an- swer, The doctrine saith, When he is called to it. But you will say, When is a man bound and cal- led to make confession?

For the answer, I will shew it in foure conclu- sions. First, when the soule hath had a true sight of sinne; & hath confessed it to the Lord abundan- tly, & through Gods mercy hath gotten some as- surance of the pardon thereof: then he need not

Object.

Answer.

When a man is bound to con- fesse his sinnes.

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looke to men for pardon, because the end of confession is accomplished already. A man therefore confesseth his sinne, that he may finde some help against it: not that a Minister can absolve or pardon any (as the popish shavelings imagine) but that he may have the direction, help and prayers of a godly Minister.

2.

Secondly, if wee have wronged any body that wee have conversed withall; though God hath pardoned the sinne, yet we are to confesse it, that we may make peace, & pray one for another; this is the meaning of that place, *Confesse your sins one to another, and pray one for another.*

James 5.16.

34

Thirdly, if a man have used all meanes ordinary and extraordinary, and hath fasted, & prayed, and sought the Lord for pardon of sin, & strength against it, and yet his conscience remaines troubled, and he sinks under the burden of his corruptions, in this case a man is called to confesse his finnes to a faithfull Minister. Indeed a man may confesse them to a faithfull Christian; but it is Gods ordinance to confesse them to a faithful minister, not that a Minister can pardon his finnes, but onely to declare when he is fitted, and to apply mercy accordingly. It is not a matter of complement, but a duty commanded: it is in this case with the soule; as it is with a mans body; he that is able by his owne skill and his kitchin-physick to cure himselfe, hath no need to seeke to the Physician: but if it be beyond his owne skill, and if kitchin-physick will doe no good, then he is bound to seeke out to a Physician, unless he will be his owne

owne murderer. It is just so with the soule of a man that is sorrowfull for sin: when he hath conscientiously used all means, and yet his closet prayers, and his closet fastings will not doe the deed, then he is bound to seeke out to a faithfull Minister, for he is the physitian that God hath appointed, wherby all the sicknesses of the soule may be eased and cured.

Lastly, if a man have beene guilty of common open sinnes, and it is knowne abroad that he hath beene an open swearer and adulterer, if God hath broken his heart thorowly for his sins, and he lies (it may be) upon his death-bed, and now enjoyes the company of a faithfull Minister, or some holy Christian, he is bound to acknowledge his sinnes, that as God hath beene dishonoured by him, so now hee may honour God, and shame himselfe, and discourage the hearts of those wicked wretches that have shared with him in the sin: if ever he be truly broken, and if God throw him on his sicke-bed, and these things be layed to his charge, he will cry out of himselfe, and say, Oh I have hated the light of Gods truth, I did persecute the cause of godlinesse, *I was a persecutor and blasphemour*, saith Paul: so it will be with your proud and rebellious hearts, if ever God open your eyes and awaken your consciences, as they must be eyther here or in hell.

Therefore when your companions come about you, cry shame of your selves, and say, The Lord knowes, and all the country knowes, that I have beene a drunkard, and an adulterer, it is the gall

of my heart. Now if God had not been mercifull unto me, I had drunk, and drunk my last: it hath cost me deare, and so it will be with you too. It is strange to see how God throwes some upon their death-beds, and fills their consciences full of horror, & yet a man cannot wrest a word from the. Nay, though all their drunken companions come about them, they have not a word to say to the, I doe not thinke that the heart of any Christian wil endure it, if ever God break his heart kindly.

Thus you see when a man is bound to confesse his sin, this is farre enough from the tyrannicall confession of that strange popish doctrine of auricular confession: they hold, all men are bound, whatsoever their condition be, whether their sins be pardoned or unpardoned, they are bound to confesse all their mortall sinnes, and to expect their pardon authoritatively from the Priests hand, upon the paine of great matters. The aime of the papists herein is, first, to snare mens consciences; and secondly, to picke mens purses: for when a man hath confessed his mortall sinnes, his conscience is snared, and then they must give so much money for the pardon of them agreeable to the offence. Now we bind no man upon paine to come necessarily, but if hee can get pardon from God in the use of the meanes, and get power against his corruptions, in this case we injoyne no man to confesse; but when the Saints doe come, it is not because we wil or can sel pardons, but only to fit them for mercy. And this is the truth, and that our Church holds,

Popish confession, what.

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This falls marvelous heavy and foule upon those, that are so farre from this duty, that they are opposite against it, and account it a matter of madnesse and childishnesse, to acknowledge their offences to any man. Men would be comforted in regard of the sorrow they feele, but they would not be content to open their sinnes, and take shame to themselves: This harbours in the hearts of many carnall wretches, and so they are deprived of the fruit of the Gospell: They thinke it all their cunning, to shift, and shelter, and mince their sinnes, and to keepe them close from the knowledge of the Minister.

It may be, the wife is sicke, and the husband saith, I pray you shew her some comfort. Why, saith the Minister, what needs thee any comfort, seeing thee was never in distresse? Oh! saith hee, shee hath lived an honest quiet woman; and so by this meanes wee heare of nothing, but good. I would faine wrest this madnesse out of the hearts of carnall wretches. When the Lord hath them upon the racke, then their consciences are full of horror, and they know not which way to take; yet they scorne to acknowledge any thing: Shall they be (convicted of their sins, and) such babies, to cry their sinnes at the market-crosse? they have a better course then so: for (say they) who knowes it? and, let him prove it, or the like. What if no man ever yet knew it? thy owne conscience, and God, knowes it.

If thou goest to a Physitian thou wilt lay open all thy soares & all thy paines to him, or else thou

expectest no help from him; and canst thou looke for any comfort from a minister, and never discover thy sinnes, whereby thou art hindered in a good course; men would be comforted, and yet never knew why they were afflicted;

You that keepe your sinnes so close, and maintaine them so tenderly, the God of heaven will plucke those sweet morsels from your mouthes, and lay them upon you, when you would be rid of them; As a man that is sicke, he will not send to the Physitian, because he thinks he is able to beare it out, till at last the disease begins to fester inwardly, & all the Physitians under heaven cannot cure him; if he had sent in time, he might have beene eased; so it is with many sinfull creatures, out of a sturdy stoutnesse of heart, they soorne to confesse their corruptions, well, now God opens their eyes, and they begin to say, this is not well, and that is not well, but you will not send for the minister all this while, if it be horror of conscience, you will beare it; well, at last you come to your death beds, and the Lord layes his heavy hand upon you, and then you cry for the minister and all; oh saith one, woe to me because of this adulterous heart, this drunkenness, and this malice, and this madness against God and his people; I was a cunning persecutor, and with such a woman I committed adultery, and at last, when he hath ended his confession, he sinks and dies. Now the minister comes too late; yee will beare the check of conscience, & in time the wound growes soare, and your soule sinks into irrecoverable misery;

fery; Oh, woe to that soule, this is all because he would not have his heart launced; well, if thou wilt not, then take that cursed heart of thine, and expect Gods wrath with it, if thou repent not. See how God deales with a sinner in this kinde; the text saith, *His bones are full of the sinnes of his youth, which shall be with him in the dust: Although sin be sweet in his mouth, though he spare it, and keepe it close as sugar under his tongue, it is as the gall of asses within them;* take heed how you keepe your sins close, when conscience and horror calls upon you to confesse them, and God hath you upon the racke, and saith, these sinnes you have committed in secret, either confesse them, or they shall turne to the gall of asses; if still you will have your sins, remember that the God of heaven beares witness this day against that soule, that will not come off, but hides his sinne; take heed that God say not *Amen*, when thou art going the way of all flesh; Then thou wilt cry for mercy, but then the Lord will say, remember, that impostumed heart of thine might have been launced and cured; but thou wouldest needs keepe thy lusts and corruptions still.

Iob. 10. 11. 12.

For the Lord Jesus Christs sake now pittie your selves, if you desire your everlasting comfort, now take shame to your selves, that you may be for ever glorified; O now launce those proud rebellious hearts of yours, that you may finde some ease; teare now in pieces those wretched hearts, that the coare being let out, the cure may be good & sound.

Vse 2.

Secondly, this reproveth the cunning hypocrite, howsoever he is content to be ashamed for his sinne and to shew the foulness of it, yet it is admirable to consider what sly passages and trickes he will have before he comes to open any thing; sometimes he sends for a faithfull minister, and it is his entendment to confesse his folly, and yet he goes backe againe and confesseth nothing at all; but if the Lord follow the close hearted hypocrite and let in some more of his indignation, and make his wrath to seaze upon his soule, then he sets downe a resolution to confesse all; and yet there is such dawbing & such secret aeknowledgment of sinne, it stickes in his teeth, something he will say that may be every man can say against him, and then he speakes of hardnesse of heart, and of wandering thoughts, and that which even the best of Gods people are troubled withall; but he never comes to those sinfull lusts that lie heaviest upon his soule.

If a man that is sicke have a foule stomacke, but yet is unfit to vomit, it may be he casts the uppermost up, but the spawne of it remaines; so it is with the hypocrite, he saith something, and now and then a word falls from him, & he would faine bite it in againe if he could, but there is a witnesse within that must not be seene.

When *Rachel* had stolne her Father *Laban*'s idols, he followed after *Jacob* for them: and searched among the stuffe, but *Rachel* being something foolishly addicted that way, sate still upon them, and *Laban* must not search there: So it is

with

with the close hearted hypocrite, he is content to confesse that which all the world cries shame of him for, but there is some Idoll-lust, as secret uncleannes, or private theft, that he will not confesse.

Now for the terrour of all such gracelesse persons, I desire to discover two things in the point. First, that this is a marvelous fearefull sinne: Secondly, it is a dangerous sinne.

First, we thinke the sinne it selfe is like the sinne of *Ananias* and *Saphyra*: hee sold all that he had, and as the Lord moved him, and commanded him, he gave way to it that it should be given to the poore: But when it was sold, he kept backe one part of it: and when *Peter* said, *Didst thou sell it for so much?* Is this all the price? Yes, saith he. Now mark what *Peter* saith, *Why hath Satan filled thy heart, that thou hast not lyed to man, but to God.* Satan many times stepe into the heart; but when he is said to fill the heart, he shuts out the worke of judgement and reason, and the Word, and Spirit, and all good Resolutions in those particular occasions, which concern a man.

As if *Sathan* should say, Knowledge shall not direct him, the Spirit shall not perswade him, & the word shall not prevaile with his heart: but I will take possession of him in despite of all these; this is *Sathans* filling of the heart.

Thus it is with the Hypocrite: his conscience is awakened, and saith, Thou must confesse thy sinnes, or else thou shalt be damned for them: the

Acts 5.3.
opened.

To hide our
sins, a fearefull
sinne.

the word commands thee, and the Spirit perswades thee to confesse thy sinne; and hereupon thou saist, This is my condition; and there is no ease nor comfort to be had in private means, and therefore I must goe to some faithfull Minister, and reveale my selfe to him: and when thou hast done, thou keepest backe halfe from him, and thou lyest against Conscience, the Word, and Spirit, and all: and when the Minister saith, Is this the bottome of thy sinne? Diddest thou not commit such and such a sinne? Oh! no; I was never guilty of any such matter: and yet thou lyest. Marke what I say, this is to have Satan fill thy heart, thou givest up thy heart into the possession of the Devill: Knowledge directs thee not, the Spirit perswades not, and the Word prevails not; but the Devill crowds into every corner of thy heart, and thou wilt cover thy sins, and so perish for them everlastingly.

But secondly, as the sinne is vile and odious, so it is as dangerous; *Hee that hideth his sinnes, shall not prosper*, saith the Wiseman. Howsoever thy heart may be still for a while, yet thou shalt not prosper in thy Family, nor in the Word and Sacraments, but all meanes are accursed to thee, thou shalt receive no mercy at all: hee that confesseth and forsaketh his sinnes, shall finde mercy; but he that confesseth not his sinnes, shall not finde mercy.

As wee use to have a nest egge to breed upon, so it is the Devils cunning to leave a nest egge, some bosome lust or other in thy soule, and the
Devill

Devill sits upon this same, as upon a nest egge: and when the Devill is cast out by a slight overly confession of your sinnes, yet there is some secret lust still left in the heart, and that will breed a thousand abominations more in you. For (I beseech you take notice of this) the Devill returns and brings seven Devils more then himselfe, and he hatcheth seven times more uncleannesses then there was before: therefore as you desire that Satan may not fill your hearts, and as you desire to have any meanes blessed to you, come off kindly and currantly, eyther not confesse at all, or else confesse currantly, that you may finde mercy in the time of need.

The second Use is for Instruction, to shew us, that a broken hearted sinner is easily convicted of his sinnes, and willing to under goe any reproofe, hee that will confesse his sinnes freely of himselfe, will easily yeeld when hee is called upon to doe it. If the word lay any thing to his charge, he will not deny it, a man need not bring any witnesses against him: he will never seek to cover his sinne, but if any occasionall passage of speech come, that may discover his sinne, he takes it presently, and yeelds to it, and saith, I am the man, I confesse, this is my sinne and my folly: he doth not fence his heart against the truth.

To whom shall I looke (saith God) even to a man that hath a contrite heart, and trembles at my word: this is the root, and this is the fruit: the heart must be contrite and broken by the hammer of Gods Law, before it can shake at the hearing

Use 2.

Esay 66.2.

ring of the word; A broken heart comes not to flout at the minister (nay, that is a sturdy heart) but a broken heart shakes at the word of God; if there come a promise, a broken heart trembles lest he hath no share in it; and if there be any command, he trembles lest he should not be able to obey it, but if the Lord meet with some maine lust, as seeret malice against the Saints of God, and seeret uncleannesse; or the like: if the Lord give a wipe at these things in the word, the this broken heart hath enough, he hath his load, and longs to be private, he remembers that truth; and the wound being fresh bleeds againe, and he mournes againe, and laies hold on his heart, and saith, Good Lord; I was this malicious wretch, I intended this mischief to thy Saints, and (if it had beene in my power) I could have sucked their blood, I was that uncleane wretch: shall all these sinnes be pardoned? and shall all these cursed abominations be removed? Can these corruptions be subdued?

Brethren (yee cannot be ignorant how) a wounded heart is affected with every touch, you that have broken hearts you know it, I shall not need to tell you: Therefore when ever the Lord comes to rake in those filthy and drunken hearts of yours, they will shake within you, and you will say, this is my sinne, and these are my abominations, whereby God hath beene so much dishonored.

Use 3.

The third use is for exhortation, if you know these things (as I am perswaded you doe) then be

be intreated in the name of the Lord Jesus to walke in that way which God hath revealed; this is the basenesse of our hearts; we are loath to unbuckle our vile and secret distempers, they are shamefull themselves, and yet we are loath to take shame for them. Therefore deale openly & freely with your soules; confesse your sins freely; that God may deale comfortably with you; hath the Lord at any time let in this horror into thy soule; and is thy heart now troubled at the word; and after all thy teares, and paines, and meanes using with uprightnesse, doe thy corruptions still remaine? are they not yet subdued as they might be? canst thou not get any assurance of the pardon of them? I say then, cast away thy shamefull hiding and concealing of sinne, and do not say, what will the world, and ministers say of me? away with these shifts, God calls thee to confession the Saints have done it, and thou must; may, thou wilt doe it; (if ever thy heart be kindly broken, as it should be;) in some measure pleasing unto God, and profitable to thy selfe. But some will say, how may we doe it? For answer thereto, I will first give some direction how to doe it; Secondly, I will give some motives to worke our hearts to the same.

First, be wise in chusing the party, to whom you must confesse your sinnes, for every wide mouthed vessell is not fit to receive precious liquor, so this confession is not to be opened to every carnall wretch, that will blaze it abroad; the minister to whom you confesse, ought to have these three graces.

Object.

Ans.

1.
To whom wee
should lay open
our sins by con-
fession.

First,

1.
A skillfull mini-
ster.

First, hee must be a skillfull and able Minister of God, one that is trained up, and is master of his Art, and so experienced, that hee may be able in some measure to finde out the nature of the disease: (Not that any Minister under heaven can be so wise and holy, as to give pardon to a poore sinner: but onely hee is able ministerially to doe it under God) Hee must be able to approve himselfe the Minister of God: hee must have the tongue of the learned, and be able to breake the heart, and prepare the soule for Christ; and then to apply the cooling promises of the Gospell to him.

There are many, who in stead of curing of the soule, kill it, and by popping the Sacrament into a mans mouth, thinke to send him to heaven: but in conclusion send him to hell.

A mercifull
Physician.

Secondly, hee must be a mercifull Physician, one that will pittie a poore soule; they that have experience of trouble and misery in themselves, are most compassionate to others in distresse: he that hath beene tossed in the sea will pittie others that have beene in the same danger. If these people had gone to the *Scribes* and *Pharises*, they had beene well holpen. No, but they went to *Peter*, and therefore found helpe: when *Judas* had sinned, and betrayed his Master, and his soule was full of horror, he went to the *Pharises* and confessed his finnes, but what succour found he? they answered him, *what is that to us?* Hast thou sinned, then beare it, and looke to it thy selfe; so it is with carnall wretches, what comfort yeild they

they to a poore distressed conscience? they adde sorrow to sorrow, and say, it is nothing but melancholy, & he hath gotten this by hearing some fiery hot minister, or by reading too much in some bookes of election, and reprobation.

Lastly, he must be a faithfull minister, one that will not fit mens humors, nor answer the desires of their hearts, in speaking what they would have him; but his faithfulness must appear in two things.

First, in dealing plainly with every one, though a man be his patron, or of what place or condition soever he be, if he have a proud heart he must labour to humble him.

And Secondly, as he must apply a salve fitting for the sore, so he must be faithfull in keeping secret the sinne that is laid open to him, that nothing may fly abroad, no not after his death, except it be in some cases.

Now what remaines, but that you all be moved to take up this duty, and provoke your hearts freely to confesse your evill waies; to which purpose let me give you three motives.

First, because it is a very honourable thing, & will exceedingly promote the cause of a Christian; you will hardly yeild to this on the sudden; a man doth thinke, that if the minister knowes his vilenesse, he will abhorre him for it.

But (I assure you brethren) there is nothing that doth more set forth the honour of a Christian, and winne the love of a minister, then this. Indeed it is a shame to commit sinne, but no shame

3.

A faithfull minister and how knowae.

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2.

Motives to confesse our sins.

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to confesse it upon good grounds; Nay, when the heart comes kindly off, it is admirable to see how a faithfull minister will approve of such persons, his love is so great towards them; O, saith the minister, it did me good to heare that man confesse so freely, I hope the Lord hath wrought kindly in him, certainly now he is in the way to life and happinesse; oh how I love him, I could even be content to put that man in my bosome.

Whereas this overly, and loose dealing of yours, is loathsome to us, doe you thinke we perceive it not? Yes, we may feele it with our fingers, and (when you are gone, I tell you what we thinke) surely that man is an hypocrite; he hath a hollow heart, he is not willing to take shame to himselfe for his sinne, his confession never comes to the bottome.

Motive 2.

Secondly, confession is a matter of great safety; I take this to be the only cause, why many a man goes troubled, and gets neither comfort in the pardon of the sinne, nor strength against it; because he comes not off kindly in this worke of confession.

When you doe nakedly open your sinnes to a faithfull minister, you goe out in battaile against sinne, and you have a second in the field to stand by you: but especially there is comfort in this particular, for the minister will discover the thulls and deceits, and corruptions, that you could not finde out, and he will lay open all those holds of Sathan, and that meanes of comfort that you never knew: I am able to speake it by experience,

this

this hath broke the necke of many a soule, even because he would goe out in single combate against Sathan, and (doe what he could,) not revealing himselfe to others for help, was overthrowne for ever.

As it is with the impostumed part of a mans body, when a man lets out some of the corrupt matter, and so skins it, never healing it to the bottome; at last it cankers inwardly, and comes to a gangrene, and the part must be cut off, or else a man is in danger of his life; so when you let out some corruptions by an overly confession, but suffer some bosome lust to remaine still, as malice, or uncleannesse, &c. Then the soule cankers, and Sathan takes possession of it, and the soule is carried into fearefull abominations:

Many have fallen foully, and lived long in their sinnes, and all because they would not confesse freely: therefore as you desire to finde out the deceitfulnesse of your corruptions, confesse them from the bottome of your soules.

Thirdly, this open and free confession, may maintaine the secrecy of the soule; for the only way to have a mans sinnes covered, is to confesse them, that so they may not be brought upon the stage before all the world.

Oh, saith one, this is contrary to common reason; we are affraid to have our sinnes knowne, that is our trouble, we keepe our sinnes close, because we would preserve our honour.

I say, the only way for secrecie, is to reveal our sinnes to some faithfull Minister; for if we confesse

Motive 3.

Obiect.

Ans.

fesse our finnes, God will cover them; if you take shame to your selves, God will honour you; but if you will not confesse your finnes, God will breake open the doore of your hearts, and let in the light of his truth, and the convicting power of his Spirit, and make it knowen to men and Angels, to the shame of your persons for ever.

If *Judas* had taken notice of his sinne, and yeilded to Christs accusation, and desired some conference with Christ privately, (and said, Good Lord, I am that *Judas*, and that hell-hound that have received mercy from thee in the outward meanes, and have been entertayned among thy people, yet it is I that have taken the thirtie pence, Lord pardon this sinne, and never let this iniquity be laid to my charge;) I doubt not but though *Judas* his soule could not be saved (because that now wee know Gods decree of him) yet God would have saved him from the publike shame that was cast upon him for it: but he did not doe so, but hidde his malice in his heart, and professed great matters of love to Christ, and kissed him, and thus he thought to cover his sin wisely: but what became of that? the Lord forced him to come and to indite himselfe in the high priests hall, before the temporall and spirituall counsell.

So you that keepe your finnes as sugar under your tongues, and will be loose, and malicious, and covetous still; well, you will have your *thirtie pence* still, and they are layed up safe, as *Achans* wedge of gold was; remember this, God will one day

day open the cloffers of your hearts, and lay you upon your death beds, and then haply yee will prove mad, and vomit up all: were it not better to confesse your finnes to some faithfull minister now?

If you will not give the Lord his glory, he will distraine for it, & have it from your heart blood, as *Julian* the apostata said, when the arrow was shot into his heart, he plucked it out, and cried saying, *thou Galilean, thou hast overcome me*, the Lord distrained for his glory, and had it out of his heart blood.

Now I come to the second fruit of contrition, which is here plainly expressed, and it is this, A restless dislike of themselves and their finnes: as if they had said, *Men and brethren*, we care not what we doe against those evils of ours, whereby the Lord hath beene so much dishonoured, and we indangered, command us what you will, we must not rest thus, so loathsome are our finnes that we will doe any thing rather then be as we are.

So from hence the doctrine is this, The soule that is truly pierced for sinne, is carried against it with a restless dislike and distaste of it: or thus, Sound contrition of heart, ever brings a thorow detestation of sinne; this they professedly proclaimed before the *Apostles*. As if they had said thus much in more words,

You say we are they that have crucified the Lord of life, and we confesse it, oh happy had it beene for us if we had never listened to the plots of the

Scribes and Pharisees, but that which is past cannot be undone or recalled.

What must now be done if we rest here, we perish for ever: can nothing be done against these our sinnes, that have done so much against the Lord Jesus? we must loath our selves, and our sinnes, and we must get out of this estate, or else we are undone for ever.

Now for the further opening of this point, I will discover these three things.

First, I will shew what a distaste and dislike this is.

Secondly, wherein this hatred and dislike of sinne consists.

Thirdly, I will shew the reason, why it must be so.

For the first, namely what dislike this is; for the clearing of which you must looke backe to that which I spake before of godly sorrow. For of the very same stampe and nature, is this dislike and hatred of sinne; and it is thus much in effect. First, there is a hatred in preparation, and secondly, a hatred in sanctification; both are saving workes, but both are not sanctifying workes: vocation is a saving worke, but not a sanctifying worke: they are two distinct workes.

This hatred in preparation, is that which the Lord workes upon the soule, and smites upon the soule, and thereby puts this kinde of turning into the heart; not that the heart hath any powerfull inward principle of grace before, (for this is the first that the Lord workes) so that as be-

fore

Dislike and hatred of sinne
what it is.

fore the soule was forced to see sinne, and to feel the burthen of it; so the heart is now brought to dislike sinne; this is a worke wrought upon the soule, rather then any thing done by the soule; the Lord is now sitting and preparing the soule for the presence of his blessed Spirit.

And in this great worke of preparation the Lord workes these three things.

First, he stoppes the soule from going on any longer in sinne.

Secondly he wearie the soule with the burthen of sinne.

Thirdly, by hatred the soule is brought to goe away from those carnall lusts and corruptions, with a secret dislike of those sinnes which he hath been wearied withall.

In all these, the soule is a patient, and undergoes the worke of humbling, and breaking, rather then (it is any way) active and operative.

Thus the heart is turned away from sinne, and set against those corruptions which heretofore it was burthened with; as it is with the wheels of a clocke, when the wheelles have runne wrong, before a man can set them right againe, he must stop it, and turne it to its right place, and all these are meerly wrought upon the wheele, by the hand of the workeman; for of it selfe it hath no poise nor weight to runne right; but when the clocke-master puts to his plummets, then it is able to runne of it selfe, though the workemans hand be not there.

So the will and affections of a man which are the

How the soule
is prepared for
Christ.

I.

the great wheels of this curious clock of the soule these wheels do naturally of themselves run all helward, and sin-ward, and devil-ward: now before the soule can receive a new principle of grace, first, the Lord unmaskes a man, and makes him come to a stand, and makes him see hell gaping for him; thus the heart is at a maze.

Secondly, the Lord laies the weight of sinne and corruption upon him, and that doth sincke the soule with the horror, and vexation, and loathsomnesse of his finnes.

Thirdly, then the soule is carried away from sinne by hatred and dislike, and saith, Is this the fruit of sin that delighteth me? oh then no more malice, no more drunkenesse, thus the heart is turned away: but after the soule is once brought on to God by faith, and goes to God, & receives the spirit of sanctification, (of which we shall speake afterwards) this is a new principle of life, and out of this gracious disposition the soule is now growne to hate sinne freely, and to knocke off the fingers from corruptions, and beat downe his lusts, and to love God freely; out of that power of grace which the Lord hath put into the soule.

Now you must know, that all this while I speake of the first worke, when the soule is turned by the spirit against his sinne, being formerly burdened with the same sinne. This doth ever accompany a heart truly broken for sinne.

There is this difference betweene sorrow and hatred, sorrow feels the burthen, but hatred flings

Difference between
sorrow
for sinne, and
hatred of sin.

things it away; sorrow looseth the heart, but hatred lets out the corruption; sorrow saith, doth sinne thus pinch the soule? and hatred saith, no more sinne then; thus the Lord by his Spirit prepares the soule.

For the prooffe of this point, see what the Prophet saith, *Thou shalt consider your waies, and your doings that were not good, and shall loath your selves.* A poore Christian would teare his heart in pieces in the apprehension of his owne vilenesse, and saith, Good Lord, shall I ever be plagued and annoyed with this sturdy malicious heart? and shall I ever carry this vile heart about me, that will one day carry me to hell, if thou be not the more mercifull? this makes a man even fall out with himselfe. Again, see what the Apostle saith, for this thing you have had godly sorrow, but what hath it wrought in you? doth it worke a holy indignation and revenge against your sinfull courses? that when thy soule seeth his filthy abominations rising, swelling, and bubbling within thy heart, it takes on exceedingly, and wil scarce owne it self, but lookes away from sinne, and is weary of it selfe, in regard of the same; Nay, (if it were possible) that thou couldest be content to live without a heart, even to forgoe thy selfe, that so thou maiest not be troubled with that vile heart of thine, and so dishonour God no longer. I beseech you observe it, when a man is brought thus farre, oh he cries to God, and saith, Lord was there ever any poore sinner thus pestered with a vile heart? Oh that this heart should ever be lo

Ezek. 30.31.

Luke 19.8.

Esay 30.21.22.

2.
Quest.

Answ.

Wherein a true
dislike of sinne
consists.

I.

He desires to
have his sinne
discovered.

opposite against the Lord? Lord, except I had a better heart, I would I had none at all: thus the heart loathes it selfe, and in what measure the soule is carried with a restlesse dislike of sinne, as it is sinne, in the same degree it is most violent against those sinnes, whereby he hath most dishonoured God; as you may see in *Zacheus*, his heart did most rise against his master sinne; so the Lord having humbled the repentant *Church*, thou shalt defile thy graven Images of silver, and the ornaments of thy golden Images; thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth, and say, get you hence. They hated all sinne, but especially their Idolatrous courses; so it will be with the heart that is truly broken, he will cast away with hatred all his pleasing and profitable sinnes: thus much of the first passage.

The second passage is this, Wherein doth this true hatred consist, that a man may know whether he have sinne or no?

Answer, this hatred or dislike consists in these foure particulars.

First, if the soule doth truly hate sin, then it is very willing to make search for it in every corner of the heart. And any sinne that he cannot know himselfe, he is willing that any Christian, or any friend should make them knowne unto him; A King that hates a traitor that would kill him, and a man that hates a thiefe that would robbe him, they are willing that any man should discover that traitor or thiefe, and they will entertaine him kindly, and reward him for it.

When

1. Sam. 39. 20.
21.

When the Ziphites came to Saul, and told him where David was, mark what he saith, *Oh blessed be ye of the Lord; for you have had compassion upon me.* Just so it is with a broken bleeding heart, that hath an open hatred against his corruptions; if any Minister or Christian will make knowne some base lusts that lurke in his soule, he will not flye out, and say, What is that to you? Every rub must stand upon his owne bottome, and if I sinne I must answer for it: Nay, hee will blesse the Lord for it, and say, Blessed be the Lord, and blessed be such a Minister, & blessed be such a neighbour, for they have shewed mee my sinne, and had compassion upon my soule.

Secondly, as the soule desires to have sinne revealed, so it desires to have sinne killed, and it makes no matter how it be killed, or by whom, so it be killed at all.

Hence it comes to passe, that the soule which truly hates sinne, is ever seeking to those meanes, that are most able to give strength to him, and to overcome his corruptions; and is well pleased that any minister should meet with the base haunts of his heart; and if the word hit & wound that master sinne of his, hee is marvelous content therewith, hee cares not from whom the help comes. The sharpest and keenest reproofes, that will shake his very heart, and draw blood out of sinne, and the most powerfull deliverer of Gods word, that divides betweene the marrow and the bones, hee likes best.

Nay, though the great Cannons roare, and Gods

He labours to have his sinne killed.

Gods ordinances worke mightily upon his heart; so that his corruptions may bee killed and subdued, hee blesteth the Lord, and saith, Blessed be the Lord, I have had a good day of it, the Lord layed battery against this wretched heart of mine; I blese God for these reproofes and judgements threatned; my heart is in some measure broken under them, I hope my corruptions have gotten their deaths wound this day.

3.
He hates sin in others.

Thirdly, as hee desires to see sinne killed in himselfe, so hee is not able to see sinne in others; but so farre as God hath put authority and opportunity into his hands, he pursues it with deadly indignation.

As a man that hates a murderer, hee will not onely keepe him from his owne house, but hee pursues him even to the place of justice: So the Soule that truly hates sinne, will not onely keepe sinne from his owne heart, but hee will plucke it from the hearts of others, so farre as possibly he may.

When *Haman* had a spleene against *Mordecai*, hee was not onely desirous to kill him, but hee would kill all the nation of the *Jewes*, this was hatred indeed: so it is with a broken heart. If a broken hearted father have had a proud heart, and hath bene wearied with it, hee labours to kill all the brood of those cursed distempers in his children.

Lastly, hee labours to crosse and undermine all those occasions and means that have given any succour to his corruptions of heart: the soule hath

hath such a secret grudge against the thriving of sinne, that it loathes all occasions that may maintaine his sinne: as the drunkard and adulterer hate the place where they went in to commit sinne.

He hates all occasions and meanes of sinning.

As in warre, haply they cannot take the enemy, but they will drive him out of the Country, and burne downe all his Forts, and fill up all his Trenches, that hee may finde no provision: so the heart that truly hates sinne, and hath beene truly broken for it, will hate all occasions and whatsoever may be any meanes to strengthen it. Even all these proud and whorish lockes, and these Spanish cuts, & all these wanton and garish attires, and light behaviours, which were nothing else but the Tent wherein his vaine filthy light heart hath lodged.

Luke 7.38.

Thus it was with *Mary Magdalene* & the reason why it is so, is this because the heart that hath beene broken for sinne, and burdened with the evill of it, hath now found by wofull experience, that sinne is the greatest evill of all others: and therefore (for the preservation of it selfe) it will hate that sinne which separates betwene God and the Soule, and with which the safety of the soule cannot stand.

Every thing in reason desires the safety and preservation of it selfe; the soule knowes sinne to be the greatest enemy, and therefore it is most invenomed with violence against sinne, and faith, Whence come all these miseries, and what is the mint out of which all these plagues and

and Judgements come? Is it not my sinne? It is not povertie, it is not sicknesse, nor disgrace that pincheth mee, but my sinne first caused all these.

It is the poyson of sinne in povertie, and the poyson of sinne in shame, and the wrath of God in all these by reason of my sinne. These evils were not evill to mee, but that my sinnes make them so.

Had I a heart to feare G O D, and to love him, and depend upon him, in poverty God would enrich mee, and in shame hee would honour mee, and in misery hee would comfort mee: It is not povertie, nor shame, that doth hurt mee; but sinne lyes, and venomes my soule.

And therefore the soule now cries, *Man and Brethren, What shall I doe to bee freed from these corruptions?* Great are the evils that I have found, and marvellous are the plagues that I have felt, by reason of my sinnes: but farre worse will that portion bee, that I shall have in hell, in endlesse torments hereafter: this will bee the perfection of all misery; let it bee any thing rather then this: it is better here now to be plagued, then everlastingly damned.

Use 1.

The first Use is a ground of admirable comfort, and strong consolation to all such as have found this dislike and hatred of sinne: hee may be sure his heart hath beene broken for sinne, and so consequently, hee shall certainly have Christ and grace.

I doubt not but every soule is perswaded of this, and saith, Indeed if I could finde my soule greeving within me for my rebellions, and finnes, then I did not doubt it; but how shall I know whether my soule hath beene ever as yet truly wounded for sinne, as sinne.

Object.

Ans.

How to know
that your
soules are truly
broken for sin.

1,

Psal. 39. 24.
opened.

I answer, if thou hast this hatred, and thy heart is carried against thy finnes with an utter indignation against them, then certainly thy soule hath been truly broken; indeed, sometimes a man doth hate his finnes, more then ever he hath been burthened with them; but thus it is commonly, if thy hatred be good, thy sorrow hath been sincere; for how can thy heart goe against sinne, except thou have found some evil in it? and how canst thou be an enemy to corruption, except thy heart hath beene wounded with it? therefore let me advise all those that desire to have an evidence of the worke of grace in their soules, to goe in secret, and examine their hearts, whether they can make hue and cry after their corruptions; can you be content that all your sinfull distempers, (even those that would affect you most) should be made knowne either in publique by the ministry of the word, or in private by some faithfull Christian; and can you be content that he should come home to your hearts, and dragge out your corruptions before the world? then you have beene wounded for sinne, and are enemies against it, (as David saith) *Try me O Lord, and examine me, and prove my heart, and my reins; and see if there be any wickednesse in me.* He deales like a good subject

subject that lockes all the doores, and bids the officers search if there be any traitor in his house, if any one hide the traitor, he is a traitor himselfe in so doing, so *David* as it were sets open the doore of his heart, and saith, Good Lord, if there any wickednesse in me, yet not discovered, Lord let that word, that Spirit, and that messenger of thine, finde it out; reprove me, convince me Lord, and discover my hypocrisie, and pride of heart, This is an honest heart certainly.

2. Secondly, when thou hast found out thy sinne by the help of the minister, then here thou must not rest; but thou huntest for the blood of thy corruptions, and thou canst not be quiet till thou see the death of them; the soule can doe little of it selfe, but it would have the Lord doe all for it; so though thou have not sanctifying grace, & hast not power of thy selfe to kill thy corruptions, yet thou makest all thy friends thou hast to use all meanes to sinke thy enemies that else would sinke thee.

As it is amongst men, when a man hath found his enemy, he followes the law hotly, and he will have his life or else it shall cost him a fall, he pursues him from one court to another, and makes all the friends that he can, that he may plague him; and if all the law in the land will doe it, he will have him hanged; this is a right barred indeed; so the soule can doe little of it selfe, yet it indeavours, and makes a levy of forces, and prayers, and will not leave sin with life, it pursues sin hotly, and if all Gods words and all the promises, and

and if the grace of Christ will doe the deed, it will not rest til it see the decay of sinne, and therefore it will even dragge sinne before the Lords tribunall, and there cry for judgement, and say, Lord kill this proud malicious heart of mine; these are thy enemies, & the enemies of thy grace; Lord they sought my blood, let me have their blood; blood for blood, tooth for tooth. O let me see their destruction.

The second use is a word of instruction; Is this contrition? and doth it bring forth such fruits? the true broke godly sorrow is rare in the world, and there are few that have it even amongst those that thinke themselves some body in the bosome of the Church; therefore save me a labour, and cast your eyes abroad in the world and enquire in the houses and villages where you dwell, and knocke at your neighbours hearts, and say, is there any broken hearts here? it will appeare; there are but few broken hearts here to be found amongst the professors of the Gospell; and so, few shall be saved.

If this true hatred be a true evidence of broken heartednesse, what will become of a world of prophane persons, that are caried on with the pursuit of sin, from which they will not be pulcked; the drunkard will have his cups, and the adulterer his queanes, and the chapman his false weights; they are so farre from this dislike of sinne, that they hate every thing save sinne; they hate the godly magistrate that would punish them; nay, they hate the Lord himselfe, and say, it was pittie there

Vse 2.

Prov. 28. 29.

Prov. 1. 28.

there was such a law made to punish sinne, what shall we doe? let us doe any thing rather then be hindered in our pleasures; what shall we do that we may not be checked and reprov'd? get you downe to hell, and there you shall have elbow roome enough, there you may be as wicked and as prophane as you will, and that will be your portion, unless the Lord be mercifull unto you. Consider what the wise man speaks, and doe not thinke, a little humbling of your soules before God, and a few prayers will serve your turne, No, no, *then shall they cry* (saith the text) *But I will not answer, they shall seeke me earily, but shall not finde me, because they hated knowledge, & did not seek the feare of the Lord.* Oh how feareful is the doom, and how certaine is the desolation of such poore wretches!

Now the Lord, for his mercies sake, settle these truths in every one of your hearts, Amen.

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F I N I S.

